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THE WRITING OF ENGLISH

HENRY FROWDE, M.A.
PUBLISHER TO THE UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD
LONDON, EDINBURGH
NEW YORK AND TORONTO

THE
WRITING OF ENGLISH

BY

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WITH THE ASSISTANCE OF

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Why not all in English, a tung of itself both depe in conceit and frank in deliverie? I do not think that anie language be it whatsoever is better able to utter all arguments either with more pith or greater planesse then our English tung is if the English utterer be as skillfull in the matter, which he is to utter, as the foren utterer is.

R. MULCASTER, *Elementarie*, London, 1582, p. 258.

. . . . Education is the greatest problem and the hardest that can be given to man to solve. For insight depends on education, and education again on insight. Hence education can only advance slowly, step by step; and it is only through the continued handing down by one generation of its experience and knowledge to the next, each adding something in turn to the common stock, that a right idea of educational method can be formed.

KANT, *Ueber Pädagogik*, ed. Willmann, p. 66.

PREFACE

1. The plan of this book, as it was originally conceived, may be briefly summed up as follows :—

(1) The English boy cannot write English.
(2) The English boy is not taught to write English.
(3) The French boy can write French.
(4) The French boy can write French because he is taught how to write.
(5) Historical reasons for the foregoing facts.
(6) How the French boy is taught to write.
(7) How the English boy may be taught to write.

To this plan I have kept fairly close; but the whole substance of my essay has been modified by the conclusions arrived at in working it out.

In dealing with the 'writing of English' it is the practical aspect of the question that strikes one first. The scandalous incapacity of the English boy to write clear English carries with it such obvious disabilities that we look at once for a practical remedy. Chapter I (together with other parts of the book) is intended to bring home the bare facts to those head masters, Governing Bodies of Schools, and public authorities generally who still ignore them, and to help in the fight for the introduction of English into the curriculum of our Secondary Schools for boys.

It will not unreasonably be asked how the opportunity for teaching the mother tongue is to be used when once it

has been gained. The answer to this question at first seemed to be simple: we have only to follow the methods by which the French attain such conspicuous success. But the deeper I got into the problem, the more complex and elusive and far-reaching I found it to be; and I soon realized that it could not be properly attacked without doing two things:—

(1) Investigating the French method not only from the practical point of view, but also from the historical, so as to distinguish, if possible, the meaningless or even harmful survivals of tradition from the elements that are not only effective but good.

(2) Experimenting *de novo* with English children.

The results of my investigation and experiments, carried on in the intervals that could be spared from work necessarily devoted to other subjects, are recorded in Chapters II–IV.

The historical part might no doubt have been extended very greatly. But it was my object to write a directly practical rather than a historical essay; and, while I hope that nothing of real importance since the seventeenth century has been omitted, I have attempted to sketch only such of the facts as seemed more immediately necessary for an understanding of present practice and tradition in the teaching of writing in the French schools. Further information with regard to the classical and mediaeval history of the teaching of rhetoric will naturally be sought elsewhere.

I regard as the chief conclusions arising out of my work (1) that English children seem to have no less aptitude than French for writing well; and (2) that in the teaching of the mother tongue, properly conceived, we have the most powerful instrument in the whole range of intellectual education, as it has been in this country the most neglected.

The Socratic question and answer (and the text-book) lead the pupil, as it were, by the hand. In the silent dialogue of the person trying to express himself in writing, in the advance of the imagination and the making sure of each step by question and answer of the intellectual conscience, we have the method of the master put into use by the pupil himself.

This subtle and delicate process, half-conscious, half-unconscious, I take to be the essential process of all composition. It is, I believe, capable of influencing more deeply than any other the whole working of the adolescent mind for good or for evil. A striking example of its deforming power when misapplied is shown by the influence on style of examinations. But the radical defect as it appears to me, of nearly all methods of teaching composition, from the earliest days to our own, lies in this—that for the exact fitting of the written words to an ideal conceived by the pupil, the teacher is apt to substitute an imperfect matching of the written production with a literary model; quite oblivious that the model, admirable as it might have been for its purpose, had in fact a purpose altogether different from that of the schoolboy exercise. Cicero in ancient times, Burke in modern, spoke or wrote in dead earnest to bring home a particular conviction to a particular audience; the schoolboy only tries feebly to imitate a Cicero or a Burke; he has no object and no audience in view. To ask a pupil to imitate the results of a great master without providing him with the definite stimulus and aim which made those results possible, is indeed to set him to make bricks without straw. And so it has gone on for centuries. Hence the futilities of the rhetoric denounced by Locke, the futilities still living in

that ridiculous imitation of great writing, the purposeless school-essay, set in almost every English school, asked for at almost every examination in English.

The question of the teaching of the mother tongue is part of an even wider question; for the whole process of education, intellectual and moral, involves a delicate adjustment of the necessities for acting like others and for acting differently from others.[1] The unintelligent use of the model is probably the central fault of European education. If we may trust certain competent observers (I may quote Mr. Graham Wallas), the danger in the United States lies rather in the unchecked development of individual caprice. In the method of class-teaching described below I have attempted to develop simultaneously both the imagination and the self-criticism of the individual pupil, and to secure the help at each point of the appreciation and judgement of the class as a whole. It should be said that the intellectual libertinism criticized in American schools is not, at any rate so far as I have been able to ascertain, to be found in the teaching of the mother tongue, which has assumed such great importance in that country during the last thirty years.[2] Finding nothing in England, it was to the Continent, and especially to Germany, that the Americans went for their example. A brief note on the systems of teaching the mother tongue in the United States and in Germany is added at the end of the book. I regret that I have been unable to make a detailed study of those systems on the spot. But if we have much to learn from

[1] Cf. speech delivered by President Nicholas Murray Butler, reported in the *Morning Post* for July 6, 1905.

[2] Cf. G. R. Carpenter in *The Teaching of English*, by G. R. Carpenter, F. T. Baker, and F. N. Scott (Longmans & Co., 1906), p. 46 and *passim*.

France, and something from the United States, Germany, and other countries in this matter, a great and worthy tradition of teaching English to English people must, I think, be ultimately founded on English experience.[1] The problem of the teaching of the mother tongue is indissolubly bound up with questions of social conditions, national temperament, and national requirements. In the last chapter I have attempted to point out some of the larger aspects of this problem.

2. I have embodied in my text the substance of a paper on 'The Teaching of Style in English and French Schools' read in Manchester in 1901 and published in the *Fortnightly Review* for June, 1902; of an address given to the Education Section of the British Association at Belfast in 1903; of an address to the London County Council Conference of Teachers of January, 1906; and of other addresses given on this subject at Birmingham, Liverpool, Leeds, Haileybury, and elsewhere. I had, through Mr. Lyttelton, formerly Head Master of Haileybury, now Head Master of Eton, the opportunity of discussing the matter in the autumn of 1902 with the Haileybury staff; Mr. Lyttelton shortly after introduced the teaching of English throughout the school, and I am indebted to him for reports on the progress of this teaching. He has, I understand, since introduced teaching of a similar kind at Eton.

3. In the kind of work which I have described the observant teacher will learn more perhaps from his pupils than from the outside. I have gladly to acknowledge my debt to an enthusiastic class of working men at Manchester Ruskin Hall (now merged with the Manchester Art Museum

[1] It is to be hoped that the 'English Association' recently formed may do good work in building up this tradition.

and University Settlement), and to a class of children in the practising school admirably organized by Miss Catherine Dodd in connexion with the Training Department of the Owens College. These two classes served, in 1901–2 and 1902–3, as the not unwilling subjects of my experiments.

4. The Appendix is intended mainly for teachers. It contains a few specimen exercises culled from class-work, with comments; and also a number of typical subjects, most of which have been selected with much pains, or composed, by Mrs. Amy H. Langdon, whose name appears on the title-page. Some of these subjects have been taken from the excellent school-books by MM. Morlet and Dupuis and MM. Carré and Moy, to whom, as well as to their publishers, M. Delagrave and the Maison A. Colin, we are indebted for the necessary permission to use them. If there is an infinite number of good subjects for class-exercises, the number unsuitable, for one reason or another, belongs to a higher order of infinity. After a little experience the teacher will soon begin to devise subjects suitable to the particular pupils whom he has to teach.

For further examples, in the selection of which the teacher will use his own judgement, reference may be made to modern text-books on composition, such as that of Mr. L. Cope Cornford,[1] who first, I believe, published detailed suggestions for the application of French methods of teaching composition to English schools, and to the many American and French collections of examples. The teacher must bear in mind that to ask a pupil to write a pseudo-original composition on a subject on which he is not entitled to an opinion of his own, is to pervert his judgement.

[1] *English Composition* (David Nutt, 1900).

In some instances there has been added to the skeleton or plan 'a developed composition'; but this is furnished for the guidance of the young and inexperienced teacher as to the general way in which the subject may be treated, and not as a model for imitation by the pupils. I need hardly say how much we should welcome either detailed suggestions for exercises, or criticisms, for use in any future edition of the book that may be required.

5. I have to express my thanks to the French educational authorities for the very liberal opportunities for studying French schools given to me on two occasions; and to the authorities of the Board of Education Library, past and present, for the courteous way in which they have placed the resources of the Library at my disposal. To Mr. Sadler's own writings, and the wide vistas that they have opened up to workers in education, I owe a debt which is not to be expressed in footnote references.

I desire, finally, to express my sincere thanks to my friends Mr. Edward Fiddes and Mr. G. K. Menzies, to whose classical scholarship I have had recourse, and who have given me valuable criticism while the book was passing through the press.

The index of names has been drawn up by Mrs. A. L. Champneys.

P. J. H.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTORY

THE average English boy cannot write English. 'It is notorious', says a writer in a recent Blue Book on English education, 'how inarticulate our boys are, how weak in the art of expressing themselves on paper.'[1] This is from the head master of a school; and the complaint appears repeatedly in the important and striking collection of essays on preparatory schools of which the Blue Book is composed.[2] 'The standard of Latin, Greek, French, and Mathematics is so high in scholarship examinations', writes another master, 'that English is knocked on the head. We have no time for it. The public schools require none—practically.'[3]

It is perhaps not quite as true as in the time of Locke, to whose influence in the matter I shall have to refer presently, that if a man learn to write his own tongue with exceptional purity and ease 'it is owing to anything rather than his education or any care of his teacher'.[4] The fact remains that the teaching of the art of writing in the vast majority of English schools is either casual or unconscious, and that the results of our system are lamentable.

The boys who enter our public schools inarticulate often leave them inarticulate. 'My son', said a banker to a friend of mine lately, 'has been at ——' (naming one of

[1] Board of Education: *Special Reports on Educational Subjects*, edited by Mr. M. E. Sadler, vol. vi, 'Preparatory Schools for Boys' (1900), article by Mr. G. Gidley Robinson on the *Preparatory School Curriculum*, p. 71.

[2] See especially references by Mr. M. E. Sadler, p. 90, and by Mr. Frampton Stallard, pp. 51, 52, and 59.

[3] Loc. cit., p. 52.

[4] *Thoughts Concerning Education*, § 189.

the first public schools in England), 'and he can only write letters of which the youngest clerk in my office would be ashamed.' It cannot be said that the standard of junior clerks in the matter of correspondence is very high. A Manchester merchant of standing, Mr. Noah Kolp, declared not long since,[1] that hardly a boy who came into a business office could express himself properly. It took him three or four years to learn to write a business letter unassisted. In Scotland, Mr. John Harrison, of the Edinburgh Chamber of Commerce, testified to the strange consensus of opinion among the merchants that the boys who came to them, whether from board schools or secondary schools, knew nothing of English composition.[2]

From the technical side we hear the same story. Writing on 'Electro-technics', so long ago as 1892, Professor Ayrton, F.R.S., of the Central Technical College, joined with Professor Nichols, of Cornell, in deploring 'the rarity of finding a student of electro-technics who could write a decent report. The experimental methods employed might have been good, the mathematical analysis suitable, and the calculations exact; but the description of the apparatus and of the results obtained would be scattered pell-mell over the paper'.[3] Professor Armstrong, the colleague of Professor Ayrton at the Central Technical College, writing in 1906, declares that a boy who can without hesitation write out a faithful, legible, and readable account of an experiment that he has performed is 'a living wonder'.[4]

Of medical students entering the profession, Dr. W. C.

[1] At a meeting of the Manchester Branch of the Teachers' Guild in November, 1900, after the reading of an article on this subject by the present writer.

[2] *Report of Joint Sub-Committee of the Edinburgh Merchant Company, the Edinburgh Chamber of Commerce, and the Leith Chamber of Commerce on Commercial Education*, 1900, p. 31.

[3] Presidential Address by Prof. W. E. Ayrton, F.R.S., to the Institution of Electrical Engineers, *Journ. Inst. Elect. Eng.*, vol. xxi, p. 34.

[4] *The School World*, May, 1906.

Bosanquet, F.R.C.P., Assistant Physician to Charing Cross Hospital, states in complaining of their want of early culture, that they 'often appear unable to write their own language accurately'.[1]

With regard to boys who go into the army we have the remarkable evidence given before the Akers-Douglas Committee in 1902.[2] Lord Roberts, then Commander-in-Chief, declared that officers joining the army were 'very often unable to write a satisfactory letter, or to make a satisfactory report'. That brilliant and much regretted officer Lieut.-Col. G. R. Henderson, then Assistant Adjutant-General at the War Office, in a reply to a question by Sir Michael Foster on the same point, said, 'I do not think things in that respect could be much worse than they are at present.' Colonel H. Lonsdale Hale and others were no less emphatic; and the Committee in their Report endorsed the opinion of their witnesses. The Report was indeed a condemnation of certain features of public school education far more than of military education.

Of the average pupil of the secondary schools inspected by the Board of Education, a recent Report states that he 'has no acquaintance with the English language as used by those who know how to use it, and it is not surprising that when he attempts to express himself on paper, or orally, he has little skill or facility'.[3]

On all sides we find the same defect. The English boy leaving school to enter business, the technical or learned professions, or the army, fails in one of the principal requirements for efficient activity.

[1] *Lancet*, February 3, 1906.

[2] *Report of the Committee appointed to consider the Education and Training of Officers of the Army*, 1902 [Cd. 982], with *Minutes of Evidence* [Cd. 983]. See especially Questions 2732–37, 6316–20, and 8433–42.

[3] Board of Education: *General Reports on Higher Education for* 1902 [Cd. 1738]: *Report by Mr. J. W. Headlam on the Teaching of Literary Subjects in some Secondary Schools*, p. 66.

When one asks why English boys are not taught to write their own language, one is met by answers of various kinds. The head master of Charterhouse, himself an admirable writer, put it to us recently that the English instinct for language is 'on the whole more slovenly, more slipshod, and less sensitive than that of any other European people', and suggested that the average standard of English is so low that the language is unsatisfactory for school purposes![1] The rejoinder is only too obvious: even that low standard is not reached by the average English boy—he cannot write English at all.

Regarding the plea for the teaching of English in the light of an attack on Latin and Greek, the partisans of a purely classical education anxiously urge that English can only be taught properly by means of the classics, and that, if such means should unfortunately fail, then it cannot be taught at all. Bringing the argument a little closer to the facts, their position, we may say, is this: If a schoolboy cannot learn to express what he has to say by means of stray hints thrown out in the course of translation (from authors whose ideas are remote from his own), by writing an occasional essay (on a subject entirely above his head),[2] —and by the study of Shakespeare—his case is hopeless. Press the matter a little further and you reach the conviction that the prose writer is born, not made; that the whole 'secret of style' lies in subtle characteristics unattainable by the average person.

To the English teacher of two centuries ago, the art of writing (considered apart from grammar) merely meant the elegancies of writing. Since that time the fashion in tropes has changed, and criticism has become subtler in the examination of detail, in the distinction of individual traits.

[1] *Journal of the Royal United Service Institution* for 1905, p. 655. See note A, p. 87, below.

[2] See p. 71, below.

But it is still on detail that our attention is fixed; and as a nation we ignore what Buffon regards as the very 'basis of style',[1] what Mr. Pater calls 'mind in style',[2] the ordering of our facts and ideas on some well-thought-out plan to some determinate end. When we ask if this, the fundamental element of the art of writing, can be taught, we have only to turn to France for our answer.

The positive merits of average French prose need little witness at the present day. 'No prose', says Schopenhauer, 'is read so easily and with such pleasure as French. . . . The Frenchman arranges his thoughts in the most logical, and in general in the most natural order, and places them before the consideration of his reader, so that he may be able to give his attention easily to each in turn. The German, on the contrary, weaves them together into a period in which they cross and cross and cross again, so that instead of seeking, as he should, to attract and hold his reader's attention, he requires him . . . to be thinking of three or four things at once, or rather, since this is impossible, in quick alternation to and fro.'[3]

Between German and French, English occupies an intermediate position. It is largely, though not solely, to Matthew Arnold that we owe our recognition of the fact. 'Tardily, perhaps, yet definitely,' Mr. Symonds wrote some years ago, 'we English people have come to acknowledge our own inferiority in the art of prose, and the necessity we are under of learning the rules of that art from French masters.'[4]

Not in literature alone, but in every branch of prose, in history and politics, in religion and philosophy, in mathe-

[1] *Discours sur le style*, 1753.
[2] *Appreciations. With an Essay on Style* (Macmillan, 1889), p. 18.
[3] *Ueber Schriftstellerei und Stil*, in *Parerga und Paralipomena* (Berlin, 2 vols., 1851), vol. ii, p. 450.
[4] J. A. Symonds, *Essays, Speculative and Suggestive* (Chapman & Hall, 1890), vol. i, p. 309; see also vol. ii, p. 21.

matics, and in the natural sciences, with their various practical applications, we find the French writers pre-eminently clear and attractive. It is often suggested that this clearness of structure is due not to the schools but to 'national aptitude'. National aptitudes, in this as in other things, are singularly difficult to dissociate from training and tradition. But we have here, at any rate, an aptitude not to be found in the greatest writers of French prose in the sixteenth century, Rabelais and Montaigne; an aptitude that comes rapidly into the most brilliant evidence *pari passu* with the development of a special kind of literary training in the seventeenth century; and one that has been carefully fostered, and is still kept alive by that very same kind of training in the French schools of the present day. Of this literary training, I propose in a subsequent chapter to give practical details with a practical end in view; its methods and significance cannot be fully understood without glancing first at its history; and they will be brought into greater relief if we compare by the way the history of the teaching of the mother tongue in France with that in England.

CHAPTER II

Sketch of the History of the Teaching of the Mother Tongue in France

In so far as ideals can be transported from one literature to another, we may say that the ideal of prose-structure in modern European languages is directly derived from Greek models; the teaching of rhetoric or composition transmitted to us through mediaeval times is, at any rate, derived historically from the teaching of Greek rhetoric; and we must trace it, in the briefest outline, from its origin.

It is to be remembered that Greek rhetoric had primarily in view a technical object; it was the object of the orator to win a case in the law courts or to convince an assembly; he was addressing a particular audience with a definite aim. He had his facts to start with; he had (i) to consider arguments in support of his case; (ii) to arrange those arguments; and (iii) to clothe them in suitable language. What was true of forensic oratory was also true of other forms of oratory—the orator speaks with a definite object in view.

In accordance with the classification of Aristotle there were thus three main elements in rhetoric: (i) *invention*, or the discovery of arguments; (ii) *arrangement*, or disposition of the facts and arguments in possession of the orator; (iii) *diction*, or the choice of words. But the name rhetoric was soon extended to the teaching not only of oratory but of composition in various kinds, and in Rome it became the chief subject of the school curriculum. The most elaborate classical treatise on the subject, Quintilian's *Institutes of Oratory*, is essentially a book for the schoolmaster; the author is as much preoccupied with problems

of teaching as with problems of criticism. The methods of the Greeks, transmitted through Roman writers, Cicero and Quintilian, and especially Hermogenes and Aphthonius (who wrote in Greek), were those practised in the Middle Ages; and rhetoric formed with grammar and logic or dialectic the *trivium* or first part of the mediaeval course in Arts.

In the development of rhetoric there is one feature to be noticed, of fundamental importance from the point of view of the schoolmaster. The first examples of rhetoric were, as we have seen, speeches written with a definite object and for a definite audience; and the 'rules' of rhetoric were derived in true scientific fashion from the study of the great orations which preceded the formation of a conscious art. But as the subject was developed in the schools these rules were applied to almost every form of prose composition.[1] The fable; the *argumentum*, or invented story; the historical narrative; the critical discussion of the credibility of a narrative, with arguments for and against; the panegyric of a famous man or denunciation of a wicked one; the comparison of characters, good and bad; the commonplace (generally a denunciation of vice, as illustrated in a particular type of man, e.g. 'a poor gamester,' 'a licentious old man'); the essay, or *thesis*, drawn from the comparison of things, e.g. 'whether a country or city life is more desirable,' 'whether the merit of a lawyer or a soldier is the greater'; the essay without comparisons (*suasoria*), e.g. 'whether a man ought to marry,' 'whether political offices should be sought'; the discussion as to causes, e.g. 'why Cupid was thought to be a boy'; the praise or censure of laws: such

[1] See Quintilian, *Institutes*, translated by Rev. J. S. Watson (Bell, republished 1903), II, c. iv. Quintilian is not only important as an early inspirer of education; his influence constantly exerted itself afresh, in France no less than in Italy, Germany, and England. See on this point W. H. Woodward's *Education during the Renaissance* (Cambridge, 1906), pp. 9, 37, and *passim*.

are the various exercises enumerated by Quintilian. He ends his chapter with a discussion on the best form to be used in speeches modelled on those of public life.

Now it is evident, first, that these exercises, from their nature, must have been for the most part remote from the experience of the Roman schoolboy, and, secondly, that they were written for no particular object and with no particular audience in view. The chief text-book of rhetoric in the Middle Ages was the *Progymnasmata* of Aphthonius, originally a slender volume, which gradually increased in bulk with the exercises added to it by successive editors. The method of dealing with the various forms of exercise was more systematic than that of Quintilian. Thus, for instance, the elements of a narration are enumerated as six in number: the person acting, the action accomplished, the time, place, cause, and mode of the action: while the qualities of a good narration are set down as four; clearness, brevity, probability, proper choice of words.

This is all excellent in its way—obviously helpful to systematic thinking—but alas for the subjects of the exercise! In one late Italian edition of Aphthonius the subject chosen for a narrative is the amours of Venus and Mars;[1] and the narrative is told four times over in different ways to illustrate especially the four qualities set forth above. Of all the exercises practised, that which came most into vogue was the intolerable *chria*, developed from a very simple exercise in the time of Quintilian to one of inordinate length. The *chria* was what we should now call an 'essay' on the saying, or action of a famous personage, e. g. 'Plato used to say that the branches of virtue were produced from sweat and labour,' or 'Pythagoras, when asked how long was the life of a man, after looking at

[1] *Essercitii di Aftonio Sofista tirati in lingua regolata Italiana da Oratio Toscanella. Aggiuntovi per tutto dal medesimo essempi chiarissimi* (Venice, 1578), pp. 27–28.

himself for a moment, hid himself, thus showing that life was to be measured by a glance'; or 'Diogenes, perceiving a licentious youth, struck his teacher, adding, "Why do you teach such things?"'

The usual treatment was somewhat as follows:—First the author of the saying was eulogized; then his words were paraphrased and developed, so as to bring out the meaning. Next the truth of the thought was established both positively and negatively, in the latter case by pointing out what results would follow if it were not true. Then came a comparison, an example drawn from history, confirmatory quotations from standard authors, and finally a conclusion, which often took the form of an exhortation.[1]

The *sententia* was an essay on a somewhat similar model, the saying in this case, however, being quoted without reference to its author.

Carried down from school to school through the Middle Ages, with the subjects of the exercises becoming more and more remote from the minds of teachers and taught, the study of rhetoric lapsed, deservedly lapsed, into unimportance before the growing and living philosophy of the schoolmen.[2] In the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries rhetoric barely found a place in the curriculum as an 'extra subject' in the schools of the Paris Faculty of Arts. It revived gradually during the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries. Ramus, that famous Professor of the Collège de France and educational revolutionary, who lost his life in

[1] See A. S. Wilkins: *Roman Education*, 1905, p. 78; Prof. Wilkins has here almost exactly the translation of Aphthonius himself.

[2] See C. Thurot, *De l'organisation de l'enseignement dans l'Université de Paris au moyen âge*, 1850, p. 78. M. B. Hauréau (in the *Journal des Savants* for 1891, p. 502) regards the decadence of the teaching of Latin in France as dating from the end of the twelfth century. 'In the twelfth century,' says Dr. Rashdall (*The Universities of Europe in the Middle Ages*, vol. i, p. 67), 'the revived classicism . . . was simply crowded out in the conflict of studies.'

the massacre of St. Bartholomew, tells us that, after the years of study devoted to grammar and rhetoric were over, the teachers, with threats on their lips and cane in hand, forbade their pupils to read the poets or orators.[1]

The intellectual movement of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries brought with it everywhere a renewed admiration for the literary models and teaching methods of Greece and Rome and a new enthusiasm for the mother tongues not easy to reconcile.[2]

While national literatures were bursting into fresh life in the outer world, the literary theories of Aristotle, Cicero, and Quintilian and the literary exercises of their Greek pedagogic successors were revived and practised with diligent ardour in the schools, in England as well as in France and Germany.

By the Cambridge statutes of 1549, the lecture on Terence was replaced by one on rhetoric, and the *trivium* was completely recast. The statutes directed the Professor to use the works of Aristotle, Cicero, Quin-

[1] *De Studiis Philosophiae et Eloquentiae conjungendis* (1546), quoted by A. F. Théry in his *Histoire de l'éducation en France depuis le cinquième siècle jusqu'à nos jours*, 1858, vol. ii, pp. 24–5. See also an interesting passage with regard to the reform in this matter which took place in the sixteenth century in Ramus's *Advertissements sur la reformation de l'Université de Paris, au Roy*, 1562, reprinted in the *Archives curieuses de l'histoire de France*, by L. Cimber et F. Danjou, 1re série, t. v, p. 148 (Paris, 1835).

[2] My friend Professor Tout points out that the classical erudition which was one result of the revival of letters itself tended indirectly to stimulate the use of the vernacular for scientific and learned works. It brought into discredit the living and flexible Latin which had been in common use by all European scholars throughout the Middle Ages and down to the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and set in its place a Neo-Ciceronian Latinity unsuited to the expression of new ideas and only to be handled with ease by a few exceptional men like Erasmus and Sir Thomas More. Thus the limitations of 'classical' Latin must be counted among the reasons for the abandonment of Latin as an international medium of scholarly intercourse, though even more powerful factors contributed to the same end. See also on this point M. F. Brunot, in Petit de Julleville's *Histoire de la langue et de la littérature françaises*, vol. iii, p. 641.

tilian, and Hermogenes.[1] Under Elizabeth the place previously occupied by mathematics was 'engrossed by rhetoric, and . . . although the lecturer was enjoined to deliver his discourses in the vernacular, the treatment of the subject was purely traditional',[2] that is, dealt purely with classics. By the Oxford Statutes of 1636, the lecturer in rhetoric was 'twice every week, that is to say, on Mondays and Thursdays, and also at 8 o'clock in the morning, publicly to explain the rhetoric of Aristotle, Cicero, Quintilian, or Hermogenes, and to raise such comparisons among them, as out of them to reduce the precepts of the art to a single body'.[3]

Two of the chief English educational reformers, Mulcaster[4] in 1582 and Brinsley thirty years later, it is true, advocated the cultivation of the mother tongue at least on equal terms with Latin. Brinsley, in his *Ludus Literarius*: *or, The Grammar Schoole* (1st edition, 1612), makes indeed quaint suggestions for the teaching of English on the model of Latin. Nothing could be more curious or comic than the simple Ciceronian letters in English which Brinsley gives as models for his pupils.[5]

But the precept of the English reformers, like that of their German colleagues of the seventeenth century, Ratke and Comenius, was unsupported by example. The teaching of rhetoric in England, out of touch with the great Elizabethan movement of literature (a movement, it is to be remembered, chiefly poetic), and animated by no breath of teaching genius, was doomed to failure. How empty it had become by the end of the seventeenth century we know from the scorn that Locke pours on it in his *Essay*, pub-

[1] *The University of Cambridge from . . . 1535 to the Accession of Charles I*, by J. Bass Mullinger, p. 111.
[2] See Mullinger, loc. cit., pp. 401–403.
[3] *Oxford University Statutes*, translated by G. R. M. Ward, 1845, i, 20.
[4] R. H. Quick's *Educational Reformers*, second edition, p. 534.
[5] See note B, p. 88, below.

lished in 1690, and in his *Thoughts Concerning Education*, published in 1693.

In the *Essay* he denounces it as an art that serves only to 'insinuate wrong ideas, move the passions, and thereby mislead the judgement' (an inheritance from its origin in the Greek Law Courts, hard indeed to get rid of), although he admits that it includes 'order and clearness'.[1]

In the *Thoughts*, changing his mood, it is on the utter futility of the teaching as a means of education that he dwells, and on the poverty-stricken use of the English tongue by English people. He points to the example of neighbours who have 'not thought it beneath the publick care to promote and reward the improvement of their own language', and among whom there is 'a great ambition and emulation of writing correctly'. He attributes the spread of French, which, but a few reigns before, was 'one of the worst languages, possibly, in this part of the world', to the new movement in France, and finally he points out, as Rollin was to do later to more purpose, that the supposed imitation of classical methods was no real imitation at all, since the Romans daily exercised themselves in their mother tongue, while the Greeks were 'yet more nice in the use of theirs'. His suggestions for reform were admirable, but his adverse criticisms alone seem to have been effective.[2] In 1712, Steele tells us that the Universities had grown 'dumb in the study of eloquence'.[3] From the context Steele obviously refers to spoken eloquence rather than written, but the study of the two went hand in hand. Public discussions and dissertations no doubt continued for a time to afford opportunity for exercise in Latin com-

[1] *Essay on the Human Understanding*, Book III, chap. x, § 34.

[2] See note C, p. 91, below.

[3] *Spectator*, September 15, 1712. I owe this reference to the late Sir Richard Jebb, whose important article on 'Rhetoric' in the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, ninth edition, should be consulted for the history of the subject.

Rollin.' In 1719 Rollin, in the course of an official Latin address, presented to the Regent on behalf of his University, demanded that the teaching of French as a classical language (which he had himself practised at the Collège du Plessis) should be introduced officially into the public schools.

Rollin, while an advocate for the teaching of style, is a faithful disciple of Bacon, of Comenius, and of Port Royal. 'To value things,' he writes, 'rather than words; to prefer thoughts to the ornament of thought; to find in sound judgement a safeguard against the dangerous sweetness of that polished style which pleases youth only because it has the lightness of youth . . . these are the impressions which we endeavour to instil from the earliest childhood, so that the mind may seem to owe only to itself what comes from a fortunate habit, and may be fitted for every kind of work to which we destine it in the future.'[1] By a curious inconsistency, Rollin, in the context, lays more stress on grace of mind than on solidity.

In 1726, in the first edition of his *Traité des Études*, Rollin laid down the lines on which French should be studied, and recommended certain authors as classical.[2] In 1728, Buffier, a Jesuit, following suit, published a French rhetoric.[3] We shall see later how the teaching methods

Observations particulières), points out that Rollin's *general* plan was not a new one, but a summary of the practice of the University. As far as French teaching was concerned, Rollin claims novelty, and his services as an innovator are recognized. The most complete account of Rollin and his work is given by M. H. Ferté in his *Rollin, sa Vie, ses Œuvres, et l'Université de son temps* (Hachette, 1902; out of print).

[1] Cf. Lantoine, loc. cit., pp. 245–6.

[2] *Traité des Études*, Book II, chap. i.

[3] Buffier, *Suite de la Grammaire françoise, ou Traité philosophique et pratique d'Éloquence*; republished in 1732 as part of a comprehensive system of education in grammar, rhetoric, and philosophy, entitled *Cours de Siences* (sic), &c. How far Buffier's methods were used in Jesuit schools it is difficult to say. Father C. Daniel, S.J., in his *Les Jésuites instituteurs de la jeunesse française au 17e et au 18e siècles* (1880) and Father R. Schwickerath, S.J., in his *Jesuit Education* (Freiburg i. B., 1903) contest Compayré's account of Jesuit views on this point.

of the Jesuits and of Rollin are practised in France at the present day.

Turning from the schools to the writers themselves, we find a difference between France and England, not less significant in regard to the question in hand. From the seventeenth century onwards France has possessed a series of great writers uniting critical with creative genius, the essential for the formation of a true school of prose. The rise of the French Academy, incorporated in 1635, has been quoted as a proof that this union of powers is a national characteristic; its continued existence and authority, in spite of the perils of the official spirit in literature, afford evidence of the fact more conclusive still.

It is difficult to over-estimate the action that this combination of authority, originality, and critical power must have exercised on the hierarchic mind of the French schoolmaster and indirectly on his pupils. Moreover, putting the institution itself aside, we find that three of its members who contributed largely towards the creation of modern French prose, Bossuet, Fénelon, and La Bruyère, were themselves teachers, and deeply influenced in their writing by the temperament of the teacher. Fénelon in his *Letter* to M. Dacier of 1714, generally known as the *Letter to the Academy*, proposed that the dictionary of that body should be followed by a rhetoric and a poetic, among other works.[1] The pre-occupation of teaching constantly recurs in the great French writers. What, indeed, to go back in history for some years, could be more significant than the fact that Racine's greatest masterpieces, *Esther* and *Athalie*, were written for the pupils of Madame de Maintenon's school at St. Cyr?

In the great period of English literature, the period of

[1] M. G. Lanson, in his *Principes de Composition et de Style*, quotes Montaigne and Fénelon as the two writers who have lost nothing by being unmethodical; but points out how admirably Fénelon in his *Letter* appreciates the necessity for order in writing.

Shakespeare and of Milton, we have nothing analogous. The critical school of Dryden and of Pope follows that of the French. 'By the enhancement', says a recent writer, 'of form, definition, finish, and the other characteristic virtues, classicism [transmitted by France] did us immortal service. For these are the qualities which the English have not got naturally, but which they have always shown themselves ready to learn.'[1] The readiness to learn displayed in our literature was not displayed in our schools. In Milton's theoretical *Tractate*, which might perhaps be brought forward here, we find a training in the art of writing English relegated to that distant point in a youth's education, placed by Milton at the age of twenty-one, when he is 'fraught with an universal insight into things'.

The currents of literary teaching and of literature formed in France one stream. The teaching divided from the literature must have become pedantic and stagnant. It did so, as we have seen, in England.

How far was Rollin successful in actually spreading the teaching of the mother tongue in the official schools? how far was such teaching introduced into the rival schools of the Jesuits? That Buffier should have been permitted to publish his book, obviously intended for schools, showed that Jesuit policy was changing, but the change could not have progressed far. The scanty treatment of the mother tongue originally prescribed by the *Ratio Studiorum* remained unaltered until its revision in 1832. That a real beginning had been made in the University of Paris by 1750 is shown by the direct testimony of D'Alembert, who, in his scathing denunciation in the *Encyclopédie*[2] of the teaching of rhetoric and philosophy, mentions the fact, and has a good

[1] Professor Oliver Elton, *The Augustan Ages*, p. 322.

[2] In the article *Collège*. The denunciation was repeated by Diderot in his *Plan d'une Université pour le Gouvernement de Russie*, written about 1775 (Œuvres complètes, ed. J. Assézat, vol. iii, p. 435).

word to say for Rollin. D'Alembert says nothing of such teaching in other schools.

But there is testimony with regard both to the Jesuits and the University of another and more detailed kind. The long and bitter struggle between the Jesuits and their rivals, academic, ecclesiastical, and political, was ended in 1762, a little more than twenty years after Rollin's death, by the expulsion of the Society from France. It became necessary to reorganize their schools, and Rolland d'Erceville, Guyton de Morveau, and La Chalotais, in three famous reports presented to the Parliaments of Paris, Dijon, and Rennes, respectively, set forth the doctrines of liberal educational reform of the mid-eighteenth century, and forcibly endorsed the views of Port Royal and of Rollin, as opposed to those of the Jesuits, with regard to the necessity of teaching the mother tongue universally.

The report of Rolland [1] is especially valuable from the historical point of view, for it summarizes memoirs on the subject prepared by the various universities within the jurisdiction of the Paris Parliament, viz. Paris, Rheims, Bourges, Poitiers, and Orleans, in obedience to an order issued on September 3, 1762.[2] Rolland tells us that the educational

[1] *Compte Rendu aux Chambres assemblées, par M. Rolland, des différens mémoires envoyés par les Universités sises dans le Ressort de la Cour, en exécution de l'arrêt des Chambres assemblées, du 3 Septembre* 1762, *relativement au plan d'Étude à suivre dans les Collèges non dépendans des Universités et à la correspondance à établir entre ces Collèges et les Universités. Du 13 Mai*, 1768. The Parliament of Paris, in reality a supreme Court of Justice, with certain administrative functions, was divided, like the present *Cour de Cassation*, into different Chambers, each of which had a number of presidents. Of these presidents, Barthélemi Gabriel Rolland d'Erceville was one of the most distinguished and active.

[2] M. L. Liard, in his masterly and authoritative work, *L'Enseignement supérieur en France*, 1789–1893, quotes the plan presented by the professors of rhetoric on this occasion (*Pièces justificatives*, vol. i, p. 333), but it does not seem to have been considerably modified in the form sent in to the Parliament and used by Rolland. For the author's estimate of the official teaching of rhetoric in the Paris schools, see vol. i, pp. 51–2.

policy of all these universities was practically the same, and that for convenience' sake he quotes chiefly from the report of the University of Paris. To Rollin's treatise he refers as '*l'inestimable Traité des Études de Rollin, ouvrage que l'Université de Paris se fait gloire de reconnoître*'.

'The University', he says, 'wishes the teachers to take their inspiration from the principles of Aristotle, Dionysius of Halicarnassus, Hermogenes, and Longinus, or, at any rate, that they should derive their principles from those of Cicero and Quintilian; that with the help of these authors they should draw up a manual of rhetoric (*un Abrégé de Rhétorique*) or should adopt the work of some author of repute. Until a rhetoric commanding universal assent shall be published, they may use either the treatise entitled *Praeceptiones Rhetoricae*, or that entitled, *Rhetorica juxta Aristotelis Doctrinam Dialogis explicatam.* The University also recommends the *Traité des Études* of M. Rollin, of which the second volume may, according to the University, be regarded as the real University text-book of rhetoric; and on January 4, 1766, the Tribunal of the University, incited thereto by a resolution of the *bureau d'administration* of the Collège Louis le Grand[1] of December 5 preceding, resolved "that it being established that the *Rhétorique Françoise* composed by M. Crévier had been submitted to [certain] academic persons before being printed, it could not be too highly recommended to those who desired to follow good doctrine (*les bons principes*)."' Crévier's rhetoric, it may be said, follows the plan laid down by his master and friend, Rollin, and the author justifies, as a novelty, the use of French examples instead of Latin to illustrate the principles of rhetoric. We see that in the University of Paris 'French rhetoric' had, by the middle of the eighteenth century, taken its place definitely beside the teaching of the classics.

[1] Once the largest of the Jesuit schools.

Guyton de Morveau, the famous lawyer and chemist (and at a later date the colleague of Lavoisier), in a memoir presented to the Parliament of Dijon in 1762, put the case for the teaching of French on grounds even more weighty than the love of the mother tongue itself; I mean the intellectual advantage to the pupil. His argument is not out of date in England to-day. Is it not evident, he asks, that a youth will hear with greater curiosity and interest, that he will grasp with greater ease and justness, comments on a French text, than on a book which must be translated slowly, so that with each passage he loses sight of the preceding one, and that, with the insistence on each passage separately, the beauty of structure and necessity of the whole piece remain altogether unsuspected? What notion, he asks, can the pupil have, under such conditions, of the *invention* and *arrangement* of the author?[1] The argument for the use of the mother tongue is furnished hardly less cogently in the essay on national education, presented to the Parliament of Brittany, by that other famous and strenuous adversary of the Jesuits, La Chalotais.[2]

In the reforms of the *parlementaires*, as they are called, the question of the mother tongue was only an item, though an important one; they wished above all to establish a national system of education, in which the universities would have played their part. But the French universities of the eighteenth century, unlike those of Germany, proved irresponsive to the stimulus of the time. The great intellectual movement of France, which provided the Revolution with the first scientific men of the world, took place outside the universities; and with the new changes the French university system, including its system of secondary

[1] I have translated, with some little freedom, from the text of Guyton de Morveau as quoted by Rolland, loc. cit., p. 73. Guyton de Morveau's Essay is not in the British Museum.

[2] Caradeuc de la Chalotais: *Essai d'éducation générale ou plan d'études pour la jeunesse*, 1763.

schools, came to an end. From 1789 to 1795 the universities were gradually disintegrated by transitional legislation.[1] In the latter year the system was definitely swept away, under the Convention, and the *Écoles Centrales*, with a six years' course for pupils of from 11–12 to 17–18, became the secondary schools of France, by the law of the 7 *ventôse*, *an* III (25 Feb. 1795).[2] Their organization was somewhat modified a few months later by the law of the 3 *brumaire*, *an* IV (25 Oct., 1795).

The study plan of the *Écoles Centrales* was extravagantly encyclopaedic; and 'general grammar' seems to have replaced in them the greater part of the literary training in French of the later schools of the Monarchy.[3] One of the teachers, writing in the *Décade Philosophique*, protested that French should be taught, not from dry and revolting grammars, but from the *Provincial Letters* of Pascal, the *Funeral Orations* of Bossuet, the *Mondes* of Fontenelle, with selections from Racine, Boileau, Rousseau, and Voltaire; and that the pupils should leave the school possessing not universal knowledge but the power of teaching themselves.[4] The result of the literary teaching of the *Écoles Centrales* was a failure.[5]

But apart from the question of the mother tongue and of

[1] See Liard, loc. cit., vol. i, p. 221 and *passim*.

[2] On these schools see, primarily, Liard, loc. cit.; see also Albert Duruy, *L'Instruction publique et la Révolution* (1882), particularly with reference to the present subject, pp. 223–5, and his critic, G. Compayré, in his *Histoire de la Pédagogie*. M. F. Picavet, in his authoritative work *Les Idéologues* (1881), brings forward incidentally many new documents relating to the *Écoles Centrales*.

[3] In the revised curriculum, the school life was divided into three periods of two years: the first for drawing, natural history, ancient and modern languages; the second for the elements of mathematics, physics, and experimental chemistry; the third for general grammar, belles-lettres, history, and legislation.

[4] See Picavet, loc. cit., pp. 55–6.

[5] Liard, loc. cit., vol. ii, p. 9.

the general curriculum, and in spite of merits of detail, the whole system of secondary and higher education founded under the Revolution failed to realize the splendid and liberal ideas of its founders. 'What was dreamed, announced, and desired by the men of the Revolution was a system of higher education corresponding in breadth and in co-ordination to the Sciences themselves; the result of their efforts was a system devoid of internal cohesion, made up of compromises, inferior, and undoubtedly contrary to, their own ideal.'[1] The need for further reform was fully realized under the Directory; and Napoleon, as First Consul, in 1802, set the whole system of secondary and higher education on a new basis, in which the *Écoles Centrales* were replaced by the *lycées* that we know to-day. Napoleon took at first a simple view of the curriculum of the secondary school; for each *lycée* he prescribed four teachers of Latin and four of mathematics; that was all![2] But in the law for the reorganization of secondary teaching of the 11 *floréal, an* X, (1 May, 1802) of which the draft was repeatedly submitted to him by Fourcroy, the views of Rollin again triumphed, and French was placed in the *lycées* on an equality with Latin. The Commission appointed by order of the 27 *frimaire, an* XI, (18 December, 1802) declared that the honour of the mother tongue was avenged.—*L'honneur de la langue maternelle est bien vengé.*[3]

It is beyond the scope of the present work to follow out completely the changes in the programmes of French secondary schools since 1802, for details of which, down to the year 1888, reference may be made to the two volumes

[1] Liard, loc. cit., vol. i, p. 253.

[2] Guizot, *Essai sur l'histoire et sur l'état actuel de l'Instruction publique*, 1816, quoted by Liard, ii, 19. Napoleon fully recognized later the place of the mother tongue in the secondary schools, though he denied it a place in higher teaching. Liard, ii. 100–2.

[3] See an interesting article, 'La Réforme de l'Enseignement secondaire sous le Consulat,' by M. Paul Gautier, in the *Revue Universitaire* for October, 1898, pp. 218–30.

dealing with secondary education in M. Gréard's classical work, *Éducation et Instruction.*[1]

It cannot be said that the mother tongue during the whole of this period was treated on an equality with Latin. According to the study plan of 1821, French composition was not taught as a specific subject till the age of fifteen (*classe de seconde*);[2] under the Second Empire not till the age of sixteen (*classe de rhétorique*), when, however, it at once assumed the greatest importance, the *discours français* being ranked as of equal weight with the *discours latin.* It is, however, clearly to be borne in mind that the Latin composition practised in all the higher classes of the schools meant, as in the schools in which Bossuet was trained, Latin composition, and not translation into Latin, that it involved 'invention' and 'arrangement' as well as 'diction'.[3]

In the course of time the useful smaller exercises prescribed by the Jesuits, by Port Royal, and by Rollin, had disappeared, the compositions of the *classe de rhétorique* consisted chiefly in imaginary speeches, and pupils who had never during their seven years of school life been asked to express an idea of their own in French were suddenly asked to put speeches into the mouths of Saint-Bernard, Richelieu, Louis XIV, Turgot, Mirabeau—all the great personages of French history.[4]

M. Jules Simon, in the remarkable circular which he

[1] Published by Hachette, 2nd edit., 1889.

[2] Kilian, *Tableau historique de l'instruction secondaire en France*, 1841, p. 157.

[3] On the 'modern' side of French secondary schools the place occupied by the mother tongue in the curriculum has always been a large one. What corresponds to an English 'modern' side was first called *enseignement spécial*, later, *enseignement moderne*, and has now become the *Section sciences–langues vivantes*, under the study plan of 1902.

[4] See the admirable chapter 'Du discours latin et du discours français' in the book of that veteran reformer and scholar, M. Bréal, *Quelques mots sur l'instruction publique*, 1872, pp. 238–54.

issued, as Minister of Public Instruction, in 1872,[1] complains that in the lower classes a pupil was only permitted to plan a composition and to express his thoughts if he wrote in Latin verse or Latin prose. . . . Why, he asked, should they not reach the most difficult form of composition, the speech, by means of graduated exercises; and why practise the speech only, a form responsible no doubt for the empty declamation and disdain for exact information with which their countrymen were reproached. It is significant that this was written in the year after the 'empty declamation' which led France to make war with a light heart.

A familiar letter, M. Simon argues, or the simplest of stories, will second the moral influence of the teacher better than a translation or a discourse, and will bear naturally on modern life, its needs and its duties. 'Our pupils must not forget that we must never speak for the sake of speaking, or write for the sake of writing; but that we only speak or write to narrate a fact or to express a just idea.' M. Simon expressly enjoined the teaching of the mother tongue right through the school, and this régime has continued down to the present day. The liberal spirit of the reform of 1872 excited protest from the reactionaries; but the new ideas triumphed finally with the reform of 1880 under M. Jules Ferry, and the principles of the reform were set forth in a statement annexed to the study plan of that year by the *Conseil Supérieur de l'Instruction publique*, of which M. Gréard, in his capacity of Vice-Rector of the University of Paris, was President.[2]

The text of the relevant paragraphs must be quoted :—

1. *Dans tout le cours des études et dès les premières classes l'enseignement aura pour objet de développer le jugement de l'enfant en même temps que sa mémoire et de l'exercer à exprimer sa pensée* . . . . . .

[1] *Bulletin administratif du ministère de l'instruction publique: Circulaire à MM. les proviseurs sur l'enseignement secondaire.* 27 septembre, 1872.

[2] *Bulletin administratif*, &c. for 1880, pp. 974 et seq.

5. L'étude de la langue française, durant la première période triennale sera rattachée aux diverses connaissances élémentaires qui y prennent place, et s'en inspirera dans les divers exercices de la classe. En outre, des exercices variés, écrits et oraux, sur la valeur et l'acception des mots, sur la propriété des termes, sur les tours et mouvements de phrases, et sur les premiers éléments de l'art d'écrire, avec une part déjà faite à l'invention dans ce qu'elle a de plus simple, permettront d'aborder en sixième le latin dans les conditions plus favorables pour l'intelligence et la traduction des textes.

8. . . . . Les compositions françaises, distribuées et graduées dans les diverses classes, ne seront plus uniquement des narrations, des discours ou des lettres. Tous les sujets propres à entretenir l'habitude de la réflexion, à former le goût, à fortifier le jugement seront utilement employés aux exercices de la classe. Ils seront surtout littéraires en Rhétorique.

On évitera l'abus des matières qui favorisent trop les amplifications stériles, et on habituera l'élève à trouver les principales idées de ses compositions.[1]

In 1885 the formal teaching of the principles of rhetoric was abandoned, not without exciting regret;[2] and the fusion of the classical and modern sides in the scheme of 1902 led finally to the sacrifice of the name *classe de rhétorique*,[3] inherited from the Jesuits, for which *classe de première* was substituted. The class on the modern side corresponding to the classical *rhétorique* had long been known by this name.

The circulars of 1872 and of 1882 are of historic impor-

[1] M. Compayré in his *Histoire de la Pédagogie* (1897), p. 401, regards these instructions as largely inspired by the theories of the Swiss educator, Father Grégoire Girard, author of the *Cours éducatif de la langue maternelle.* See note F, p. 96, below.

[2] See A. E. Chaignet, *La Rhétorique et son histoire*, 1888, Preface, and O. Navarre, *La Rhétorique grecque avant Aristote*, 1900, pp. 329 et seq.

[3] '*Nous avons supprimé ce vocable vieilli, pour bien marquer que la fin de nos études secondaires n'était pas, comme ce mot pouvait induire à le penser, l'art de bien parler.*' Speech by M. Liard, delivered in the University of London; *Revue International de l'enseignement supérieur* for July 15, 1906, p. 560, and *Record of the Visit of the University of Paris to the University of London*, . . . 1906 (Murray, 1907), p. 57.

tance; they mark a definite step in the advance from the literary and dogmatic method of teaching the mother tongue to the scientific and individualist method, the passage from the use of such teaching as a method of cultivating the taste in literary subjects remote from life, to its use as a method of cultivating the individual judgement in dealing with the problems of every day.[1]

The fact that school life is an integral and essential part of the national life, that methods of school training are an affair of statesmen as well as of ushers, has been realized in France for three centuries. The struggles of the Jesuits of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, first with Port Royal, and later with Rollin and the Universities (in which they taught their opponents so much), showed that they appreciated to the full the danger, from their point of view, that lay in the cultivation of the mother tongue. We recognize in them the secular conflict between 'authority and anarchy', between 'servitude and liberty', between 'discipline and freedom', in which neither side has said the last word.[2] It is perhaps not possible yet to express, except in action, a reconciliation between these opposites.[3]

It would be a mistake to suppose that the battle is over in France, that the official leaders of French educational thought have succeeded in carrying out their ideas to the full. The teaching of the mother tongue is still too

[1] For a protest against this system from the conservative point of view, see the interesting historical book, *Les études classiques avant la Révolution*, by the Abbé Augustin Sicard (Perrin, 1887), p. 113 and *passim*.

[2] Cf. Paulsen, *Geschichte des gelehrten Unterrichts*, 2nd edit., vol. i, p. 431.

[3] In England, where many persons of extreme conservative politics are individualists, we have unwittingly made the choice on the side of the seventeenth century Jesuits in regard to the use of the mother tongue; the intellectual training of our schools presents the sharpest possible contrast to their moral training, which offers such full opportunities for independent decision and action—another example of the 'Two-mindedness of England', on which Mr. Sadler has written so admirably. But this point will be treated more fully later.

literary, too remote from life, too declamatory, and the effects of such teaching are apparent. If proof were needed of this, we find it, on the one hand, in the character of many organs of the French Press, obviously intended to appeal to a cultivated but easily satisfied public; on the other, in that admirable pronouncement of French Liberals, *L'Éducation de la Démocratie*[1] in which MM. Alfred Croiset and Gustave Lanson, men of letters of European reputation, have preached the necessity for scientific method in the teaching of literature. The addresses collected in this book were delivered in the winter of 1902–3, at a time of national stress, since happily relieved, and constitute a forcible appeal to the national conscience.

In subsequent chapters I propose to record my actual impressions of the teaching of the mother tongue in France, and to point out the reasons which seem to me to account for the partial failure of the French reformers.

[1] *L'Éducation de la Démocratie*, by MM. Ernest Lavisse, Alfred Croiset, Ch. Seignobos, P. Malapert, G. Lanson et J. Hadamard (F. Alcan, 1903): a series of lectures given at the *École des hautes études sociales*, in the years 1902–3. See also a book by M. Lanson, *L'Université et la Société moderne* (A. Colin, 1902).

CHAPTER III

The Methods of Teaching Composition used in French Schools

My direct knowledge of the teaching of composition in French schools is largely based on what I saw in 1898 in a number of schools in Paris, opened to me by the courtesy of the late M. Octave Gréard, then Vice-Rector of the Academy of Paris, supplemented by information gained during a second visit in the Christmas vacation of 1903–4, when similar courtesy was extended to me by M. Liard, the eminent successor to M. Gréard. With full permission to visit any class in any school, I saw, during my visits, the teaching in a primary school, in a higher primary school (*école primaire supérieure*), in an *école professionnelle* (the École Dorian), in six classes in secondary schools (the Lycée Louis le Grand, the Lycée Henri IV, and the École Alsacienne), from the *sixième* upwards to the *classe de rhétorique* (re-christened *première* in 1902), and in a class at a training college for women teachers in elementary schools (the École normale d'institutrices in the Boulevard des Batignolles).[1]

With such variations as one might expect from differences in age of the pupils, and the great freedom fortunately allowed to teachers of the subject, I found a method the same in its essentials everywhere.

[1] I desire to acknowledge my debt to the French officials, and to the staff of every school which I visited, for the unfailing kindness shown to me, and also to my late friend, M. Léon Marillier, of the École des Hautes Études, for many practical and helpful suggestions.

The children learn grammar and do preliminary exercises not very different in kind from those done in England. They write out accounts of object lessons and reproduce in their own words stories told to them. In the lower classes of the *lycée* or secondary school the intellectual effort demanded is somewhat more severe than in the primary. The children are asked to distinguish between such sets of words as the following (I choose actual examples) :—*excès, défaut*; *lâcheté, courage, témérité*; *prodigalité, économie, avarice*; *apathie, émulation, orgueil*; and to replace a word in sentences by a so-called 'synonym', pointing out the slight differences introduced by the change. In this way the child is set to think about the *exact* meaning of the words he uses. The illustrations are of course constantly taken from his reading. In the primary schools the children do not seem to me to be intellectually in advance of English children in the corresponding schools; in the *lycée* the difference is perhaps perceptible.

The most elementary teaching of composition that I saw was in the highest class of the primary girls' school at the rue Bignon.

The class, consisting of from thirty-five to forty pupils, was to write a composition on 'self-sacrifice' (*le dévouement*).

'What is the first thing to do?' the teacher asked. 'Make a plan,' they all answered. 'No! you must first see that you understand the question. What does *dévouement* mean?' Half a dozen children replied. The mistress corrected obvious mistakes, but gave them no hard and fast definition. They had a general idea, and each was to choose her own definition.

'The next thing?' 'Give examples,' they cried. 'Well, give one!' 'Vercingetorix,' answers one. 'Yes; another?' 'Bara.' 'Yes, any examples not chosen from war?' 'A nurse in a plague.' 'Yes.' 'A man who saves life in a

flood.' 'Yes. Very well then, we have two classes of examples:—

1. From military life.
2. From civil life.

But these are all striking things, things one hears about; aren't there any other kinds of self-sacrifice, quiet ones that no one knows about?' Not a child had anything to suggest. 'Well,' said the mistress (and I smiled), 'the self-sacrifice of a teacher to a pupil; any other?' 'Yes, of a servant to a mistress.' Very well, then, we have a third class of examples:—

3. Modest examples from daily life.

Any conclusion?' No answer. 'Well, give what you please. I should give as mine that "self-sacrifice is to be found at all times, in all countries, and in all classes."'

Of the forty exercises not more than five to ten are read through *thoroughly* by the teacher; the rest are glanced at. To do more would be a waste of time for pupils and teacher both, for children of this age, and even older children, do not read the corrections. The only effective corrections are those dealt with in class. (Cf. p. 51 below.) I did not see the corrections in this class, but in an elementary school they would naturally be of a somewhat simple character and deal largely with questions of mere grammar.

The subjects for composition given in the elementary schools are chiefly, like the one I have quoted, *moral*: they do not offer a very wide scope to the intelligence. But one point may be already noticed—the eschewing of vagueness: every general statement must be either illustrated by facts, or the summary of facts already quoted. The teacher is strict in this matter.

In the higher primary schools, the pupils are necessarily less cultured than in the secondary schools, but in spite of

this and of their more recent creation,[1] the actual *teaching* of composition is probably quite as good from the technical point of view as in the *lycées*.

My knowledge of the subject is derived from information given to me by Dr. Jean Philippe, of the École Arago, and from a lesson, at which I was present, given by M. E. Bourdon to the second-year boys at this school.

Pupils are admitted to higher primary schools after passing, at the age of twelve or thirteen, the school examination of a primary school (*certificat d'études primaires*), which I need not stop to describe. They stay three or four years at the school, and the teacher, having time before him, is not restricted to abstract subjects in morals, which are, I venture to think, ill-fitted for the teaching of composition. The discussion of moral truths in their *general* forms by young children is apt to lead to a mere parrotting of moral commonplaces, and to the formation of a superficial layer of familiarity, through which the full sense of the words used can never penetrate even at a later age.[2]

The pupil is taught first of all to write a *narration*. The plan of a simple story is given him, and he is told that he must fill in details, keeping the whole story in the same proportion as the outline. On this point the teacher insists absolutely. The pupil may know much more about some one thing in the story than about the rest: he has to suppress it. These instructions are not enough. It is so much easier to think about thinking than to think, that most children with such a task before them would merely waste time. They must be taught, therefore, to ask themselves definite

[1] For a detailed description of these schools, see an article by Sir Robert Morant on 'The French System of Higher Primary Schools' in the *Special Reports on Educational Subjects*, published by the Education Department, vol. i (1896–7).

[2] See below, pp. 56, 57. It is within the writer's experience that the first prayers taught in childhood are apt to lose all meaning from sheer familiarity with the sound of the words.

questions with regard to the subject to be dealt with. M. Payot criticizes the teachers in not making this self-catechism sufficiently systematic, but I can testify that it certainly is taught; and in some cases the excellent method is adopted of making the earliest plans a series of questions for the child to answer, and so building up the little story or essay or description.[1]

As the pupil progresses, the outline is reduced and the amount required from his own initiative increased. A new demand is thus made on his intelligence. His questioning will give him more material than he can use; he must now choose what seems to him most important or essential and reject the rest. The outline will still serve as a general guide for the arrangement of his material, but he is given more and more freedom in this respect until he finally learns to form his plan for himself, a brief subject alone being dictated by the teacher.

The members of a class at the École Arago, consisting of boys of fourteen, were asked to write about the Ginger-bread Fair, which is held each year in the Place de la Nation, close to the school. I took away with me, and translate here, one boy's exercise. I have tried to translate as literally as possible, merely avoiding unnecessary baldness.

THE GINGER-BREAD FAIR

A few days before Easter the mountebanks begin to instal themselves for the opening day. They all bring with them their latest successes, the circuses, their equestrian exercises, and the theatres, their pieces; quite different from those of last year. [At last] Easter comes, the great day looked forward to by the children, glad to have their usual holiday, and to enjoy new pleasures. Before the hour fixed for the opening, I got ready and went to the fête. The handles

[1] See, for excellent examples of the method used, *Le Livre de français*, by MM. F. Braeunig et E. Marty (Delagrave, 5th edit., 1896), and the edition for teachers (*Le Livre du Maître*), of the same work. See also note F, p. 96, below.

of the organs were going round. The horns of the tramways made a terrible noise (*un vacarme du diable*), the locomotives thundered away;—add to that the shouting of the clowns with faces painted red, black, blue, yellow, &c., and their grotesque puns, and occasional insolence. I thought myself in a veritable pandemonium.[1] After a little while I recovered and began my usual visits.

My first thought was to go to see the immortal Cirque Corvi. The clowns by their grimaces and puns and jokes were making the bystanders laugh.

Inside the circus I saw monkeys, dogs, a goat, and horses performing.

The monkeys began their performance by a comic representation of a military tribunal. It was wonderful to see how these animals did their work. They behaved like the members of a court-martial in a serious case. The meal of the monkeys followed. The cook brought in the dish (*le mets*) in a basket, but he often only brought in half [its original contents, i.e. having eaten the rest]. Then came the business of the dogs. They played leap-frog with extraordinary lightness and suppleness. Then the goat went through surprising exercises; she climbed up piles of glasses with a water-bottle at the top. The horses jumped over obstacles—long jumps and high jumps—with extraordinary agility, danced equally well, and rose on their hind feet.

After having seen this place I continued my walk. There were innumerable platforms. Everywhere the clowns first went through antics, and then followed their programme (like that of the 'monkey and the leopard')[2] and depreciated their neighbours and rivals. I then saw the savages of the Buttes Montmartre and the Caribbean ladies of Juvisy[3] and the like. I cannot of course describe to you all the booths, theatres, circuses, that I saw, but the few things I have described are those which remained as most remarkable in my mind.

Night fell, enveloping the booths in darkness. The tight-rope dancers lit their lamps and began to beat the retreat [on their drums]; their neighbours kindled the naphtha iron tubes, which shed a dancing light, and turned the handles of their organs indefatigably.

And for three weeks, day and night, the handles of the organs grind out the same tunes, the tramway horns make their terrible row, the railway engines whistle unceasingly, the clowns pull the same faces, and repeat the same puns.

Let him who will find it amusing. I had quite enough after a week.

[1] The boy would not have used so long a word, but it is the only possible rendering here for *enfer*.

[2] In La Fontaine's Fable.

[3] A suburb of Paris.

On the original, the time of writing is given :—

Begun Tuesday, May 31, 8–10.
Wednesday, read and re-read, 8–9.
Thursday, read and copied, 8–9.

Four hours in all.

Thus the exercise took four hours in all to write and copy out. The boy had destroyed his plan, but, judging from others that I saw, it would have been written out somewhat after this pattern :—

1. Easter ; opening of fair ; beginning of holidays. 2. The noises of the fair. 3. The circus—performing monkeys, dogs, goats, horses. 4. The theatres. 5. Night at the fair. 6. Conclusion—it all goes on for three weeks and one gets tired of it.

It is impossible not to be struck by two things in this composition, which is of course faulty in detail. In the first place it is both systematic and picturesque in description, and in the second place the plan is subordinated with considerable art to the general impression with which the writer concludes—'one gets tired of it.' (I should have liked to see a subject treated *con amore* by the same boy.) An English boy dealing with the same theme would have thought half an hour, or an hour at most, ample for the work ; and he would probably have begun by saying that it was 'jolly good fun' to see the end of the fair, and concluded by describing the first arrival of the vans. Most of his adjectives would have merely suggested his own sensations and have been utterly useless to a reader trying to form a picture of the fair. The first-rate French teacher immediately pounces on such words as *joli*, *beau*, &c., and asks the boy to make the reader feel the justness of such epithets rather than to use them himself.

But power to write a description of this kind could certainly not be obtained merely by practice in writing. There is a

second element in the teaching of style which is regarded by the French as no less essential: the systematic study and analysis of the French classics. The pupils are taught to read great French authors and constantly to analyse what they read, to pass backward from the developed composition to the plan. Of all authors the one who serves French style best is the incomparable La Fontaine.[1] Incomparable for this purpose, because with perfect lightness of touch every fable is in itself a complete and definite composition, with not a word too much and with each word adequate to its purpose.[2] There is, no doubt, much to be said for the indefinite in literature, but nothing in teaching children of from thirteen to fifteen to write intelligibly.

The first thing a boy has to do after reading a fable aloud is to analyse it into its different parts. I chose the fable of 'Le Vieillard et ses Enfants', modified from Æsop, and made a boy of fourteen in the École Arago read it for the first time. I then asked him to give the plan of it.

'It begins', he said, 'with a proverb—*Toute puissance est faible à moins que d'être unie*,' and then, after thinking for a moment, 'there are three parts:

(1) The father advises his sons not to quarrel, and illustrates his advice by the example of the sticks.

[1] See *La Fontaine et ses Fables*, par H. Taine, fourteenth edition, pp. 46–7. For the teacher of composition this book is invaluable.

[2] The *Fables* have survived the lively criticism of Rousseau in the second book of *Émile*. Rousseau forgets that 'make-believe' is one of the earliest realities of child-life; and further, that to allow a child to read only what he is capable of understanding completely is to follow a method far indeed removed from the method of nature. With regard to this point the reader may be referred to an article on 'Interpolation in Memory', by Dr. Marcus Hartog, published in the *Contemporary Review* for October, 1900. We can easily agree with Rousseau if we allow a child only to *write* or *say* what he understands. But in reading, the process of *complete* analysis in class may be bad from the educational point of view if it becomes wearisome. Half a loaf is better than indigestion.

(2) The father makes them promise not to quarrel.

(3) The father dies, the sons quarrel, and are ruined.'

Of each of these parts he pointed out the exact beginning and ending.

I have spoken of La Fontaine because he is the most useful of all authors in the teaching of the plan. But he is, after all, only one among many. The use of the *Recueil de Morceaux Choisis* is regarded as an essential element in the teaching of the mother tongue. These extracts from classical authors are almost invariably chosen so that each forms a complete piece in itself; and the French boy who has not scraped some acquaintance with the prose of Bossuet, Fénelon, Pascal, La Bruyère, Montesquieu, Mme de Sévigné, Voltaire, Rousseau, Buffon, Diderot, Chateaubriand, Mme de Staël, George Sand, Michelet, and with the dramas or poems of Corneille, Racine, Molière, Beaumarchais, Victor Hugo, and Lamartine, to say nothing of contemporary authors, is hardly to be found.

A quotation from the *Programme d'Études des Écoles Primaires Supérieures de Garçons, prescrit par Arrêté du 21 janvier* 1893, will be useful. (The programme in the mother tongue is the same for the girls' as for the boys' schools.)

The pupils must be taught to disengage the essential idea from a developed composition; to understand the precise meaning of the words used and to recognize their appropriateness; and, as far as possible, to feel the special characteristics and beauty of the piece selected. The teacher must not omit to describe in a few words the place of the extract in the work from which it is taken, nor, when it seems required, to give brief details with regard to the life and work of the author.

The lessons to be learnt by heart are always to be chosen from pieces studied in this way.[1]

[1] *On leur apprendra à dégager d'un développement l'idée essentielle, à comprendre le sens précis des mots, et à en apprécier la propriété, à sentir dans la mesure du possible, le caractère et la beauté du morceau. On ne négligera pas de replacer en quelques mots le fragment étudié dans*

In the programme for the higher primary schools translations from foreign masterpieces, English and German, are also prescribed. Defoe, Scott, Lamb, Charles Dickens, George Eliot, and Mrs. Gaskell figure in the list of authors. In addition a certain number of the classical plays of Corneille, Racine, and Molière are read through and give the pupils an idea of compositions on a large scale; while the *Morceaux Choisis* give them a freedom of style and fullness of vocabulary that they could not learn from a single writer, however great.

Teaching of Composition in Secondary Schools

The teaching in the secondary schools differs, as we have said already, rather in the results obtained than in method, from that in the higher primary schools. The pupils live in a more literary atmosphere and home training has done more for them.

I give below an exercise read out during my visit to M. Paul Gautier's *classe de troisième*, the lowest class in which continuous composition is taught, at the Lycée Henri IV. The age of the writer of the exercise was fourteen, the average age of the class. The subject was given as follows: 'You are to describe the sailing of fishermen from a small port on the coast of Brittany or Normandy for deep-sea fishing; the group of women and children on shore; the parting; the behaviour of the men; the vessel disappearing.' I quote almost in full the one selected as the best; and have, as before, translated as literally as possible.

Clean and infinitely gay was the little Breton port. Along the quay stretched a line of pretty whitewashed houses. The masts of the

le cadre de l'ouvrage auquel il est emprunté, ni, quand il y aura lieu, de donner des renseignements sommaires sur la vie et l'œuvre de l'auteur.

Les leçons à apprendre par cœur seront toujours choisies parmi les morceaux ainsi expliqués.

Compare the method prescribed by the Jesuits, see note E, p. 94.

vessels rocked [1] steadily to and fro in the air. Here [below] was the unceasing bustle of people coming and going. But following one of the narrow and winding streets that led to the upper town one saw nothing but gloomy houses with never opened windows. Roses climbed up the iron railings, and the roadway was covered with golden lichen. Above, the clamour of the bells, and in the distance, woods as far as the eye could see.

It was towards the end of May and there was unusual liveliness in the harbour, for one of the graceful three-masters, a Newfoundlander, was to sail next day for the cod-fishing. The *Félicité* had already seen service. This year she had been freshly painted and repaired. The guardian angel at the prow had been re-gilt, and everything on deck shone again.

Three months ago when the engagement of the sailors began, all, young and old, had been seized by a kind of fever. Bands of twenty and thirty wandered round the three-master and passed like flights of birds migrating.[2] But when the agreement was once signed, when the sailors had received their instalment in advance, I know not what breath of folly passed over the town; it fell into an excess of enjoyment, a frenzy of merriment and drink, in which the good resolutions of a few days before disappeared. The farewell to their families was perhaps to be the last, and they were to enter a gehenna [3] of suffering and privation: the least they could do was to make up in advance for the evils to come. On the last day the farewell supper was held at the inn of Uncle Job, the oldest Newfoundlander of the port. His complexion remained fresh [4] after many long voyages; a white beard encircled his face and his large blue eyes were infinitely soft in hue. The sailors had spent their last farthing; they were thinking of the approaching hour of departure and the farewell to their country and those near to them. But the spirit of adventure, their carelessness, their improvidence, and their fatalism prevented them from seeing things in too gloomy a light.

Uncle Job's inn was more like the canteen of a ship than an inn. The bed, the clock, and the cupboard were built to form a single piece of furniture along one wall. Opposite was the great table, and at the

[1] The word used was *se dandinaient*, and was corrected to *se balançaient*.

[2] This simile was criticized as unreal.

[3] Criticized as exaggerated.

[4] The boy had used the word *vert*, which was criticized because of its double meaning.

end of the room in the immense fireplace was a fire of dried seaweed and ships' timbers.

A meagre tallow candle stuck into an empty bottle was dying out on the table, and between the glasses of ardent spirits Uncle Job was telling his stories of old times. . . . . [seventeen lines omitted].

But the women had remained near the fire spinning or sewing. They but half heard the wonderful tales of Uncle Job, for they were full of their grief. The young wives could not contain their tears. It was easy to say 'God willing, all will go well', but the sadness returned. They did not weep, but their hearts were torn. The night passed into day. From dawn the port was in movement; in the upper town the belfry rang out its loudest, for they were about to bless the ship. Jean Marie, Pierre Jean Bélugot, Yves Marie Tanguy, carried along a miniature frigate, hung during the rest of the year as an ex-voto from the ceiling of the church. The frigate was balanced across a thin plank and a sailor boy pulled it up and down by a ribbon fastened to the stern to imitate pitching and the children surrounded the vessel, and threw nuts on to it, crying 'Kraoun, Kraoun'.[1] The priest blessed the ship, and the schooner was carried back to the church. The people talked a great deal and prayed a great deal; at last it was time to sail. Once on board, the sailors quickly cast loose from their moorings, and as the ship glided away, as the men worked on board, singing, (for once on board they recovered their gaiety), as the three-master was swallowed up in the morning mist, the women on shore still followed with their gaze the boat that had disappeared.

The exercise took five hours to write. The boy (M. P.) gave me his plan, which I quote in the original:—

I

1. Description courte d'un petit port de Bretagne.
2. Description du bateau en partance.
3. Description des gens qui entourent le navire.

II

1. Sentiments des marins depuis l'embauchage.
2. Psychologie du matelot qui part.
3. Le souper d'adieu—Tonton [Oncle] Job.
   L'auberge.
   Conversation.

[1] The Breton for 'nuts.'

4. Bénédiction du bateau. Les marins se recueillent un moment.
5. Départ (1) Les hommes occupés au navire.
(2) Les femmes sur le rivage.

It will be seen at once that the method of this remarkable composition is essentially the same as that used in the more modest description of the Ginger-bread Fair. We find the same precision both in plan and in the choice and use of epithets. The description is that of a real Breton seaport; but, as the master pointed out, there is a good deal of Pierre Loti, as well as of actual observation, in the exercise. The chief criticism on the composition as a whole was that the end was decidedly too short in comparison with the beginning.[1]

M. Gautier gave me a list of subjects recently set, which I subjoin:—

(1) Give a portrait of the *Bourgeois Gentilhomme* of Molière, on the model of La Bruyère.

(2) The Battle of Eylau.—At the battle of Eylau the Russians and French fought with the greatest obstinacy. The struggle was bloody, and at its fiercest near the cemetery of Eylau, which commanded the plain. Snow was falling, and the intense cold added to the horrors of war. A company of French grenadiers was charged with the defence of the cemetery and was ordered to hold out to the last. At dawn the captain called the roll; the only remaining members of his company were a sergeant, a drummer, and himself.

You are to relate this episode, putting the story in the mouth of the captain.

(3) Compare the account of the affair of the Allobroges in Sallust's Catilina and Cicero's third Catiline Oration.

(4) Suppose that a young provincial recently enlisted in the musketeers of Cardinal Richelieu had had the good fortune to be present at the first performance of *Le Cid*. In a letter to a friend in the country he describes his impressions.

(5) The childhood of the Cid (purely imaginary).

It will be seen that the subjects offer considerable variety.

[1] It ought, perhaps, to be mentioned, on the one hand, that the boy happens to be descended from particularly gifted parents and grandparents; but, on the other hand, I was told that he was by no means always first in his class, and that others were equally good in composition.

In a *classe de seconde* at the Lycée Louis le Grand the composition I heard discussed was an imaginary conversation between Flavus and Arminius, of which a plan, founded on chapters 9 and 10 of Book II of the Annals of Tacitus had been given to them. The chief criticisms on various exercises read out were: (1) that they were too disconnected; (2) not simple enough in style; (3) too matter-of-fact, like a verbatim report of a police-court. In the highest classes of the school the subjects resemble those set for college essays in England. In the *classe de rhétorique* at the Lycée Louis le Grand the subjects given out were: (1) In what does the originality of Voltaire's work in history consist? and, (2) French types in the sixteenth century.

Throughout the classes the literary form of the exercises is varied to the utmost. The story, the description, the dialogue, the letter, are far more frequent in the lower classes than the essay. Compositions are done as a rule fortnightly, out of school, and the average time given to each composition is from four to five hours.

Woe betide the boy who is slow and heavy-footed in treating a light subject (La Fontaine generally saves him from that), or one who marshals his topics in a set order in a letter. During my experience nothing impressed me more than the admirable accounts of a school journey to the manufacturing towns of the North of France and Belgium written by the pupils of the École Dorian (an *école professionnelle*). The episodes of railway travelling were treated lightly and humorously; the landscapes sketched in without sentimental or superfluous adjectives; and the descriptions of workshops were written in grim earnest, and began in all cases with a statement of the amount of horse-power available, an account of the boilers required to produce it, the engines, mode of transmission of power, &c. In a word, the pupils learn to write easily, naturally, and clearly, as a

result of their school training. *Ce qui n'est pas clair n'est pas français.* As I entered a class-room in one of the *lycées* I heard the master positively thunder at a boy—'*Traitez moi comme un ignorant!*' The exclamation is significant. It reveals at once the attitude of the French teacher at work in training his pupils, and the fundamental secret of his success. We shall see later that English training in writing, such as it is, proceeds on an exactly opposite principle.

CHAPTER IV

THE WRITING OF ENGLISH: ITS TRIPLE AIM. THE READING OF ENGLISH LITERATURE

WE have seen that the English boy cannot express himself in English, while the French boy is capable of expressing himself in French. Thus the use of French methods as a remedy for English incompetence, in this matter seems clearly indicated. But 'we cannot wander at pleasure among the educational systems of the world, like a child strolling through a garden, and pick off a flower from one bush and some leaves from another, and then expect that if we stick what we have gathered into the soil at home we shall have a living plant. A national system of education is a living thing. . . . It has in it some of the secret workings of national life. It reflects, while it seeks to remedy, the failings of the national character.'[1]

In describing the history of French methods and practice in the teaching of style, we have touched incidentally on many of the underlying educational problems: it is now necessary for us to sketch them briefly in their most general form, independently of French experience, before investigating their specific bearing on English education. And I think I shall be able best to present the general problem of the teaching of the mother tongue, as I view it, by explaining, with some degree of exactness, the way in which I was myself led as a teacher to approach it, although that may seem remote from the ordinary path trodden by those who deal with questions of style.

[1] M. E. Sadler: *How far can we learn anything of practical value from the study of foreign systems of education?* Guildford, 1900.

The facts from which I started were these. The students to whom I was teaching chemical analysis in the laboratory, and also some of the more difficult parts of the history of chemical theory, showed incapacity of expression of two kinds, which, from the educational and philosophic point of view, it is of real importance to distinguish clearly.

In the first place, I found many students (and my experience is the common one) incapable of putting down on paper for the information of another person, or for their own use when once forgetfulness had set in, an intelligible record of the experiments by which they had succeeded in solving, it might be, a fairly complex problem in chemical analysis. In such cases I was able to assure myself that incapacity of expression did not necessarily imply incapacity of thought. Max Müller says, in his book on 'The Science of Thought', that we cannot think without words.[1] If he were right, the problem of training in the mother tongue and the problem of thought-training would be identical. But I feel convinced that his view is an exaggerated one. The fact that an illiterate mechanic has before now devised elaborate machinery which he would have been totally incapable of describing in words, appears to ruin his generalization. The case of my own students, successful in analysis (and they were no mere rule-of-thumb workers), but incapable of describing in words their successful reasoning in images or things, is no less to the point. Nor could one deny to the great painter, sculptor, or musician, the faculty of being able to think out, without words, a great work.

There is, again, a world of things real, but intangible, an essential part of the social, emotional, and religious life, that words at most suggest and that they cannot represent, but of which the mind thinks in a way that often leads to striking and decisive action.

[1] F. Max Müller, *The Science of Thought* (Longmans & Co., 1887). See p. 549 and *passim*.

Incapacity of expression in words may, then, in some most important cases, go with the power of thinking. But there are, on the other hand, cases, and in ordinary life I believe they are the majority of cases, in which it is impossible, or almost impossible, to distinguish incapacity of expression from incapacity of thought. When, for instance, the students to whom I have referred had to criticize some complex piece of chemical theory, they invariably wrote down prose that was totally unintelligible. Upon questioning they would cheerfully admit that they 'hadn't said what they meant'; but what they did mean (for here there was no laboratory test) it was impossible to ascertain. They could learn to repeat an argument. Their power over the mother tongue was insufficient to allow them either to offer any satisfactory proof that they understood a chemical theory, or to criticize it. One may safely say that such comprehension as they may have had was almost useless to themselves, and quite useless to other people.

The case of chemical theories may perhaps not be regarded as typical. But the same analysis would apply to the organization of a city, or of a business, or of the plan of a military campaign (or, say, to the methods proposed for disposing of excess military stores).

Thus, if it is true that we *can* think without words in dealing with concrete subjects not too various in kind; if, again, there is a world of thought that lies too deep for words; it is no less true that in dealing with a subject that is abstract, or else complex, not only in degree, like a machine, but in kind also, then language becomes absolutely necessary as a means of expression, and necessary for three purposes: to keep a record of our own thought, to elaborate and develop it for ourselves, and to convey it as completely and clearly as possible to other people.

It is apparent that the problem of the teaching of English

to English children is a much wider and more complex problem, and at the same time a more fundamental problem, than the teaching of French, or German, or Latin, or Greek; although the distinction is often concealed by our easy use of the general term 'language-teaching'. It is the more necessary to point this out because our methods of teaching English are largely based on the ancient methods of the schoolmaster devised for the teaching of foreign languages, and this, oddly enough, at a time when we have begun to re-discover that the best method of teaching the elements of those languages is to imitate the natural methods of learning the mother tongue.

It is only the absurdities of present practice that justify the reminder here, that while the majority of English boys will not at any stage be able to think freely in a foreign language, the average boy of ten or eleven has already a considerable vocabulary and mastery of the mother tongue, in speech, if not in writing; and that, though he may be totally ignorant of the rules of grammar, he has the power of saying accurately *what he needs and wants to say* in the language in which he thinks. He is quite capable, at that age, of beginning, with a little help, to explore and develop and stimulate his own thought by observation and reflection, and by setting down the record of that observation and reflection in his mother tongue; he has the free play of a very large part of his mental faculties. In the study of a foreign language he applies those faculties over a very limited range; for the problems of linguistics, whatever value we may attach to them, form, after all, only a small portion of the general problems that present themselves, or that ought to be presented, to the mind of a child. Schoolmasters speak of the disciplinary value of the classics. They are apt to forget that our teaching of Latin comes from a time when Latin was used as a real substitute for the mother tongue—when it was a living language. There is no

need in any way to belittle the utilitarian or disciplinary advantages of teaching foreign languages, ancient and modern. They have, at any rate, one fundamental use—in enabling children to distinguish between words and ideas, since the same idea is translated in different languages by different words. But to a large number of our children they must remain inaccessible; and, in any case, the teaching of a foreign language can as little replace the teaching of the mother tongue as a finger can replace the use of the hand.

We have pointed out above that the writing of the mother tongue is used for a triple purpose: we should, then, in teaching the art of writing to our pupils, have a triple aim in view:

(1) To enable them to record their own observations and thoughts.

(2) To stimulate them to explore and elaborate their own thoughts and to develop their own power of thinking.

(3) To enable them to convey to other people the result of their thinking as clearly and completely as possible.

There is also a semi-mechanical use of writing (other than copying) which has not been referred to previously, but which may be mentioned for the sake of completeness: I mean its use in transmitting instructions or in reproducing information in a form slightly different from that in which it is received; a use frequently made of it by the clerk and the examinee. A pupil who is capable of recording his own observations, and of expressing his own ideas conscientiously and adequately, will have no difficulty in reproducing the instructions of other persons when need arises.

To discuss teaching questions purely in the abstract is to swim on dry land. I propose, therefore, before generalizing further, to leave for the moment this purely theoretical exposition in order to describe the results of certain experiments in the teaching of composition which I made in the sessions of 1901–2 and 1902–3 with a class of working men

at Ruskin Hall, Manchester, and in the latter session with a mixed class of boys and girls of from ten to thirteen in the Practising School of the Owens College (now the University of Manchester), of which Miss Dodd was the organizer and head.

I begin with what was, in fact, my first lesson in the Practising School. I face my class. 'I am going to tell you a story which I want you to tell me again, not as I tell it to you, but in a particular way. This is my story:

'A boy gets up late, hurries over his breakfast, runs off to school, and on the way drops his reading book into the mud. The wheel of a cart goes over the book and spoils it. When the boy reaches school, the master asks him why he is late. He replies. The master then asks him for his reading book, and he tells the whole truth. The master tells him that his parents must buy him another book. The boy is sorry, as his parents are poor and cannot well afford it.

'Now,' I say to my class, 'I want you to tell that story over again in a particular way, as if you were telling it to a little brother so as to make him realize that, after all, it is as well not to be late for school. First of all, do you think your brother would listen to you if you just repeated the story in the way I have told it? Is the story interesting or dull?' I have tried this story with five classes, comprising altogether about a hundred children. The almost invariable answer (and the one I desired) was 'Dull'. In one class opinions were equally divided, and the head mistress told me, after a show of hands, that the clever children voted for 'Dull' and the others for 'Interesting'.

'Yes', I continue, 'it is a dull story. Your brother wouldn't listen to it. Well, how are you to make it interesting?' After an interval the answer invariably comes, 'Make it real.' 'Quite right; but how?' Again

after an interval you get the answer, 'Give the boy a name.' 'Good; you may give the boy any name you like.' (The class looks pleased.) 'Our name for the moment shall be Jimmy Brown. But I'm afraid if I simply put "Jimmy Brown", for "the boy" in my story it will still remain a dull story, and not a very "real" one. How can I make it more "real"?' To this you get the answer, after a little pressing, 'Say how it all happened.' 'That's it, of course! Let us say how and where and why everything happened. Now, where is Jimmy Brown at the beginning of the story?' 'Why, in bed, of course.' 'Yes, and then what happens?' To which the class, so I find, now replies, with scarcely a moment's hesitation, 'Why, his mother went to call him, and he said, "All right, mother," and turned over and went to sleep.'

I now stop this lesson with a few general directions. To complete the verbal preparation in detail would be to defeat the whole purpose of the teaching. I simply tell the children that each one is himself to continue the method of questioning begun in the class, to ask himself how, when, where, why, each thing happened, and that the answers will give him his story. One thing more. If the story is to be good, pains must be taken. It is to be handed in, say, in four or five days, and meanwhile it is to be thought out at odd times, so as to make it as interesting as possible.[1] Then a rough copy is to be written. This is to be corrected and revised, and finally a fair copy is to be written out. The class is made quite plainly to understand that the work cannot be polished off in twenty minutes, and that the actual writing, if it is done properly, will probably take not less than an hour and a half.

The first lesson, as I have described it, occupies not more

[1] Professor John Adams suggests that the children might be encouraged to make actual experiments in telling their stories, during the interval.

than from ten minutes to a quarter of an hour. It is followed a week later by a criticism lesson. It was only after considerable trial with my adult class at Ruskin Hall that I found what seems to me the most satisfactory form of this lesson. The criticism lesson may, at a pinch, when one is experienced, be improvised; but to get the best results the exercises should be handed in a day before the lesson, and the teacher should read them through carefully, choosing seven or eight typical ones to deal with in class. On the rest only the briefest of written comments should be made. There is, I believe, with others, no more shocking and exhausting waste of a master's or mistress's time than that devoted to detailed corrections not dealt with in class. But that is a question to be treated apart.[1]

I have, then, determined the general character of the lesson (though with a mind ready to change under the stimulus of events), and face my class once more.

I now ask the author of one of the selected exercises to stand up and explain exactly and fully what it was he was asked to do. Bobby Smith stands up and looks over his shoulder at the rest of the class to see what they think of this unusual procedure. I make Smith keep his eyes right, and speak up like a man. He knows exactly what he has to say, and can say it with a little encouragement, just as well as the French boy, or the German boy, or the American boy. Self-consciousness in speech disappears astonishingly quickly when a boy or girl really has something connected to say, and when you make it plain that this isn't 'showing off', but part of the every-day business of school work. I next read Bobby Smith's composition aloud, and as well as I can. I especially want to direct Smith's attention and the attention of the class, not to small faults,

[1] Cf. J. Payot, *Revue Universitaire* for June, 1897, p. 19; July, 1897, pp. 146 et seq.; and Jan., 1898, pp. 15 et seq. See note F, p. 99, below.

but to the questions of general construction and sense. This is all-important. I even go so far, on a first reading, as actually to amend, without drawing attention to them, faults of grammar that would take the attention of the class from the sense and continuity of the composition. All my fierce indignation at misplaced commas, and errors of spelling, I keep for the time to myself. They are the merest trifles compared to the business in hand. When I have finished reading his composition I ask Smith if he thinks it a good piece of work. I may say at once that Smith won't answer me. If, instead of Bobby Smith, I were to ask Lucy Robinson, I should probably get the reply 'Bad', because Lucy thinks this to be the reply that I want. My general experience is that boys, when they are not too lazy to have an opinion of their own, are at first too shy to express it; while girls are anxious to have the opinion that they think you wish them to have. With Bobby or Lucy, as the case may be, I must immediately come to closer quarters. 'Is the work as well done as you could have done it? If it is not, how could you have improved it?' And we then come to one question never to be omitted. 'Is the work good *as a whole*?' With a first exercise one generally gets the frank and striking criticism that the end is too short for the beginning. The effort has 'tailed off'. It is a first lesson in the architecture of style, never forgotten. I may, if I please, enforce it by drawing on the black-board a man with a big head and body and short legs. Children have a sense of proportion that only needs exercise; they perfectly well understand working to a plan.

After questioning Bobby Smith about the composition as a whole, I ask the class for their criticism on it, as a whole. I then ask for criticisms of detail—commonsense criticisms as well as grammatical criticisms, criticisms of praise as well as of blame. I generally read over a small

passage containing either something good or something bad, but without a hint as to which, and ask for opinions on it all round before giving my own. Excellent criticisms will often be volunteered. Let me give an example.

In one of the stories the boy was called, not by his mother, but by 'one of the maids'. Objection was at once taken to this on the ground that if the parents could ill afford to buy a new reading book they would not be able to keep servants.

Again, many of the stories began 'It was a bright, sunny morning'. In almost every class one child or another objected to this on the ground that if the roads were muddy it had probably been raining, and the day was likely to be a dull one. Here is an example written by one of these objectors.

LAZY DICK

It was a dull and damp morning. The previous night it had been raining and it was not yet dry, as Richard Greenwood was awakened by his mother's call, 'Dick, my boy, do be quick, or you will be late for school.' 'All right, mother,' replied Dick; for he was not a bad boy, only he was lazy. After a time he turned over and thought no more of his promise. In about twenty minutes' time he again heard his mother's voice: 'How long are you going to be?' said she, 'your breakfast is ready.' Now Dick's mother, Widow Greenwood, was poor; her husband had died when Richard was quite little, and she had spoilt him in consequence, as he was the only child. Richard jumped up and dressed, but when he got downstairs he was too late to have any breakfast.

He laced up his boots, and in his hurry broke the lace. 'Oh! what a bother,' he exclaimed as he ran to the drawer for another.

It was not long before he was in the street, slate and book in hand. As he crossed the road, in his haste he dropped his reading-book, and, before he had time to run back and pick it up, Mr. Hunt, the milkman, turned the corner with his cart, the muddy wheels of which completely spoilt Dick's book, for it was in the country and the roads were wet.

On arriving at the school, Richard Greenwood found all the boys had taken their places for the reading lesson. 'Come, Dick! how is it you are so late?' asked Mr. Brown, the master. 'I don't know,

sir,' was the only reply Dick gave. 'Well get out your book and go to your place.' Then he told the whole truth. 'Your mother must buy another, then,' said the master.

The lesson was sufficient. Dick grew up to be the support of his mother and the pride of the village. He is now a grey-haired man, and all who know him honour him.

I confess that I found it difficult to read the ending seriously. The majority of the class, however, liked it. But what I would chiefly draw attention to is the continuity of thought shown in the composition. The thought does not wander. The writer tries to account for Dick's being spoilt by making him the only child of a widow. He drops his book because he is in a hurry. He does not see the cart because it is coming round the corner. Then, again, you have a touch of reality in his reply to the question why he is late—'He doesn't know'—a real boy's answer when he is not quite cornered, neither exact truth nor untruth. Although the class liked the story very much, and were inclined to approve of its fairy-tale ending, some one at last remarked that perhaps Dick's cure was a little sudden.[1]

This remark led later to interesting results in an original story by the youngest member of the class on the subject of 'A Day in the Life of a Lazy Boy.' Here is the story:

THE LAZY BOY

One day Tom had a holiday, and his mother and father went out very early in the morning when Tom was asleep. When he awoke it was ten o'clock, and he got to know that his parents were out and he went off to sleep again. After some time he was awakened by a knock at the door. He got out of bed and dressed and went down and opened the door. He saw his father and mother, and when they got inside the house his mother asked him what he had been doing all the time and why he did not open the door sooner. Tom said, 'I just got up.' His mother was very angry and gave him a good thrashing. But Tom did not take any notice of that, and continued to be lazy till he died.

[1] For an example in which the ending has been carefully worked out, see Appendix, p. 115.

The girls in the class were much shocked at a story so immoral, or non-moral, as you please, but Constantine explained that he knew many lazy men who must have been lazy boys, and had grown up to be lazy men in spite of being 'whacked', and his particular story was about a boy of that kind. I am bound to say that I myself took Constantine's side. I maintained his perfect right to describe the kind of boy he liked, though I hinted that laziness did not generally lead to happiness. On the same occasion a boy of eleven who had been singularly tongue-tied, and capable at first of writing only a few lines, gave me a long and somewhat romantic story—his own invention—of a boy who stopped a pair of galloping horses which he saw fifty yards ahead of him, and which he caught up and finally arrested with a leap of ten yards.[1] The story itself showed a capacity for continuous mental effort and attention which I should not have suspected, and I was particularly interested, because I am convinced that no amount of individual teaching from myself would have done for the boy what the class had done for him in ten weeks. The class, however, tried to undo its good work by scoffing at the absurdities of the composition, and it is in a case of this kind that the teacher has, perhaps most of all, to play an active part instead of merely prompting. He must see that the criticism which soon becomes acute shall never become unkind. In this work the minds and souls of the children are, as it were, naked. We must take care that they are unashamed.

The subject of an exercise can be infinitely varied: indeed, the story itself leaves room for infinite variation. In his lectures on education, Kant makes the pregnant suggestion that stories of this kind should be used to build up from within a system of morals in the child's mind.[2]

[1] See Appendix, p. 118, below.
[2] Kant's *Pädagogik*, ed. Willmann, p. 105.

He chooses as an example the story of a man who gives in charity money that he owes to his creditors. It is quite certain that when a child solves, or at any rate attempts to solve, a moral problem by means of a concrete example, the effect is likely to be much more lasting than if he is asked to accept a mere copy-book maxim. I would especially refer the reader to the work of Father Grégoire Girard.[1] Teachers will no doubt differ as to the kind of story to be used for such purposes. Plato objects in the *Republic* to our placing before youth any but good examples,[2] but I think most modern teachers will feel rather inclined, outside a model Republic, to ask children to think—to an extent limited by individual prudence—about the ordinary temptations of everyday life, from which no care can preserve them.

The narrative may be varied by the dialogue, or the description of real things. To describe intelligibly the way from one street to another in a great city is an excellent commonsense exercise. Again, one may leave a picture in the schoolroom for a few days, and ask for a description, such that a person who had not seen the picture would recognize it from the description. Here is an exercise, done by a girl of thirteen, describing a good coloured reproduction of a picture by Mason in the Tate Gallery (without further oral preparation of any kind):—

FACING THE WEST

'Shadows of the evening
Steal across the sky.'

Facing the west is the title I have given to a picture. The picture shows a man leading a white horse. Over its back is a coat, and by its side hang the unused stirrups. The man has evidently been riding, but is now leading his horse to the blacksmith's shop, for in his hand he is carrying a horse-shoe, which the horse has cast. They have their backs to us. The man is wearing a blue coat and brown trousers, he

[1] See note F, p. 96, below.
[2] Jowett's translation, second edition, 1881, pp. 59 and 80.

has also a wide-awake hat. His red tie is being blown by the evening breeze. The two are making their way over a moor. At the back of the picture is the sinking sun, which is a great contrast to the green moorland. In the foreground of the picture is a pond which the man has crossed by stepping-stones, bringing the horse with him.

At the right hand corner of the picture grow the reeds and rushes. Among these four wild ducks enjoy the summer evening. The reflection of the horse may be seen in the water. In the far distance there is a clump of trees on the horizon and a path-way leading to them. By this way the two are travelling.

In spite of minor faults, the writer has, I venture to think, succeeded in her task. The title, 'Facing the West,' seems to me an exceedingly happy piece of compression and the end again is skilful in conveying the main feature of the picture. If anyone tries his hand at describing a picture graphically he will find the task none too easy. It is, of course, in some ways easier to describe a picture than a scene of everyday life, for the artist has already selected, from the infinity of details to be found in Nature, the features which he regards as essential, and so simplified the problem of verbal statement. On the other hand, precisely because the scene is not an everyday scene, the expression in words of the feeling which it conveys is a matter of fresh difficulty.

The description, like the story, is capable of unlimited variation. You may well pass from the artistic to the scientific, and ask a class to describe an experiment performed slowly by the teacher at the lecture-table, without a word of explanation. That is an admirable exercise in observation.[1] Another remarkably useful exercise, practised, I believe, in some of the Friends' schools, is to give the class a series of facts (I myself should give them in topsy-turvy order), and to ask for a letter to be written on

[1] This suggestion has been put into practice by Mrs. Jessie White, D.Sc., in some experiments of which an account is given in the *Journal of Education* for June, 1907.

the subject of these facts, to a given person, with a given object in view.

Finally, I have used another kind of lesson in writing of which the object is no longer, as in those I have already described, exercise in the power of dealing with and arranging in orderly fashion a mass of material, but exercise in the precise use of words, quite independently of any question of translation.

I ask my class not to define but to discriminate in writing between words closely allied in sense, such as 'comrade, friend, companion; work, labour, toil, drudgery'[1]. This kind of exercise is one that I have found not beyond children of twelve and yet sufficiently hard for the adult teacher. The ordinary dictionary which 'defines' words by the use of so-called synonyms which it does not discriminate, is generally useless, and worse than useless, in the preparation of a lesson of this kind. Murray is, of course, invaluable, and, when the words are common to English and French, the Hatzfeld-Darmesteter dictionary[2] will be found of great service. In many cases the discrimination may perforce be left incomplete. Woe betide the teacher who attempts to dogmatize in this matter on an insufficient basis of knowledge. He will flounder and become ridiculous. It is better to try to work out these questions *with* the class, and with a perfect readiness to accept suggestions from whatever quarter they come. Such questions, even if not dealt with in separate lessons, are, indeed, bound to occur incidentally in the course of the ordinary composition lessons. A child uses a word like 'quaint'.

[1] In dealing with synomyms of 'work', the teacher would be greatly helped by an article by Mr. Graham Wallas in *Child Life*, for July, 1901, entitled 'A Criticism of Froebelian Pedagogy'. Miss Graveson, Vice-Principal of Goldsmiths' College, tells me she has obtained excellent results by discussing groups not of abstract but of concrete words, e.g. gate, door, &c.

[2] *Dictionnaire général de la langue française*, par A. Hatzfeld et A. Darmesteter, avec le concours de A. Thomas (Delagrave).

You at once challenge him and ask exactly what he means by it. Or he will say that the sea is 'still and calm'. Is this mere reduplication or not? —and so on. The inexperienced teacher may perhaps be warned that within recent years the problem of the development of word-meanings has received considerable attention from linguists like Darmesteter, Bréal, and others; and that writers on 'semantics', as the new science is called, are safer guides than writers on 'style' with a partiality for archaisms.[1]

I anticipate two objections that will be made by the experienced teacher to the method I have described.

Firstly, since this is a training of individuals—and out of the exercises sent in by a class of twenty or twenty-five (which is a reasonable maximum), only seven or eight can be dealt with in the hour—will not the majority of the class be disappointed at having their exercises passed over, and lose interest? The answer to that is twofold.

(i) Many criticisms of the exercises read will apply to those not read, and will be taken to heart by the pupils concerned.

(ii) Each of the pupils knows that his turn will come, and realizes that to read the exercises of each member of the class at every lesson is impossible. He learns to feel that the work is worth doing for its own sake, not to please the teacher or to get marks. As a matter of fact I never gave marks at all, and found my class as quick with interest on the last day as on the first.[2]

[1] A. Darmesteter, *The Life of Words* (C. Kegan Paul), or in the French, *La Vie des Mots* (Delagrave); M. Bréal, *Essai de Sémantique* (Hachette, 1897), translated by Mrs. Cust under the title *Semantics* . . . (Heinemann, 1900); Professors Greenough and Kittredge, *Words and Their Ways in English Speech* (Macmillan, 1901). See for some excellent remarks on this subject, Henry Sidgwick's *Miscellaneous Essays and Addresses*, pp. 282–4.

[2] I was asked at a Conference of Teachers, held by the London County Council in January, 1906, at which I described the method of class teaching set forth here, how I should deal with a class of sixty. The obvious reply was that no answer could be given without previous

Secondly, it may be asked: Is this the teaching of English in the ordinary sense, at all? Will verbs and numbers come right, will conjunctions and prepositions and adverbs find their proper places, and so on?

My answer to this second question is, that I found that they *do* in a way that is surprising. I myself asked the children sometimes to correct grammatical mistakes; I never, or very rarely, gave grammatical rules. These are lessons in thought-training, not in grammar, still less in spelling or punctuation. My experience may be summed up in a maxim—Take care of the sense and the sentence will take care of itself. I am quite prepared to admit the use of grammar lessons and of dictation and punctuation lessons, but one must not put the big things and the little on the same plane. You don't in the same breath reproach a boy for lying and tell him that his hair is untidy.

Finally, there is one supreme thing for the teacher to remember. He must admit unquestioningly the right of each child to have an opinion of his own in dealing with his subject. If the subject has been properly chosen the child will have a right to an opinion of his own. He will be saying something that he himself has thought out, not telling you what you know already. Your task is to see that he earnestly tries to fulfil his own aim. His work has, or ought to have, intrinsic as well as disciplinary value. The guidance that you give, inestimably helped by the public opinion of your class, must be of the gentlest and most tactful kind. It is the training of the growing plant that is your business, not the hammering of a piece of metal with a sledge-hammer. If the child says, 'I think this,' your limit of objection must be to say, 'Very well,

experiment, although no doubt, even in a class of this size, something more useful could be done than is done at present. I think that twenty-five should be regarded as a maximum in a secondary school. At Osborne the maximum number in a class is sixteen.

I don't agree,' not 'You are wrong.' It is obvious that this restriction does not apply to matters of fact or grammar, &c.; but even in dealing with these, I am clear that it is well to avoid an undue severity that would simply tend to crush the initiative you wish to stimulate. *Experto crede.* Teaching of this kind is a wonderful training of the teacher in humility, and in a kind of humility which I think he will not regret in the end. He will acquire a knowledge of the workings of the child-mind hardly to be got in any other way.

Before passing on to exercises of a different kind, we may now sum up the chief points in the synthetic exercises in the mother tongue according to the method of teaching described above.

(1) You find that the average English child of from ten to thirteen can speak easily, forcibly, correctly, *when he wants to say something.* In order to develop his power of speaking and writing easily, forcibly, and correctly, you make him want to say something.

(2) You make him want to say something of his own, something that he feels to be, and that is, worth saying, something on which he has a right to have an opinion. He is not repeating to you what you know already. He is observing external nature and his own sensations and recording his observations, and so doing in a modest way 'original work'.

(3) In writing he is not merely writing vaguely, as our schoolboys at present write essays on lofty themes for the world in general; he is writing for a particular audience and with a particular object in view.

(4) In order to achieve his object he must order his thoughts on a definite plan and present them clearly. The object in view soon makes the schoolboy agree with Pascal and Buffon that orderly thinking is the very basis of style.

(5) His writing stimulates, as nothing else in the school curriculum can do, the imagination of real things (to be sharply distinguished from the fairy-story imagination); the picturing of consequences that forms the greater part of what we call 'common sense', and that serves as a guide for most of our actions in daily life.

(6) In order to write consistently and with an object strictly kept in view, a continuity of attention is demanded such as is demanded in no other subject but mathematics.[1] And here I would point out that, in the view of M. Payot, who has written invaluable articles on 'Active methods of teaching the mother tongue',[2] continuous exercise of the attention in reality implies supreme exercise of the will. Certainly concentration is one of the hardest lessons for a child to learn.

(7) Besides this power of concentration there is called into play a power hardly exercised at all in school mathematics, a power no less useful in daily life, which one may call, to borrow a term from the science of the oculist, *mental accommodation*, the power of changing one's mental focus, of seeing a thing first as a whole, in plan, and then in detail. 'He that cannot contract the sight of his mind,' says Bacon, 'as well as disperse and dilate it, wanteth a great faculty.'[3]

And finally (8)—and I regard this as of fundamental importance—you make each child himself the judge of what he has done. He learns to work to satisfy not his teacher but himself. It is the business of the teacher and of the class to make the standard of satisfaction a high one. This is an ideal absolutely opposed to mediaeval ideas. Authority has a place, and a large place, in education; its place has been hitherto, I believe, too large a one

[1] Or music, when really well taught.
[2] See note F, p. 96, below.
[3] *Advancement of Learning*, iii, 6.

in English education for individual efficiency. In this particular work it is the child's own judgement that must be made supreme. His original effort to produce is to be controlled and guided by self-criticism. The aim of the teacher is to cultivate what I will call the *intellectual conscience.*

The same spirit that inspires our methods in teaching children how to write must inspire us in teaching them how to read.

At present the microscopic method employed, and necessarily employed at first, in making out the meaning of Cicero or Homer, is employed with no less zest in English schools in the study of English authors whose general meaning is plain. The obvious resource of the microscopic method when applied to our own authors is to study archaisms or abnormalities, and thus it is often for his difficulty rather than his greatness that Shakespeare is used as a school book. Place before a teacher, used to working with the excessively annotated editions of our poet, a passage of Swift, or Macaulay, or Huxley, or John Morley, and the chances are ten to one, if it contains no unusual expressions, no obsolete words to comment on, that he will have nothing to say upon it to his class.

Now, I take it that just as in writing so in reading it is the sense that matters most. If, in a passage of a great author, obsolete expressions occur, these must no doubt be explained in order to render the understanding of the text perfect. But the philological interest of an author ought to be for schoolboys and schoolgirls a purely secondary one. The greatness and the importance of a writer (one is almost ashamed to have to say it) are independent of his linguistic abnormalities.

In literature it is generally, if not universally, the fact that the author has written for a particular audience with a more or less definite object in view.

It is true that some literary works, the lyrics of a Shelley or a Heine for instance, have been written as pure expression, and for the deliverance of the poet's soul, so that they seem as free and unconscious as the singing of a lark; far be it from me to deny the value of such literature, of which the lessons may lie deep in the realm of the unseen. And there is again the playful in literature; witness some of Lamb's essays, which it might be desired that more teachers and schoolboys would regard as inimitable. To attempt to derive lessons in method from literature like this is difficult, if not impossible; and to attempt it with boys and girls, is to sacrifice the chief value of the piece. But there is much literature, and of the greatest,—moral, patriotic, political, economic, scientific (using science here in the widest sense of the term, and including all kinds of *Wissenschaft*, philosophy, history, education, no less than the physical and biological sciences)—of which the object is clearly to be ascertained, and in which our pupils may study the method of great writers to their own profit.

It is within the experience of most teachers that the first quality to appeal to an untrained person listening to prose is that of smoothness to the ear. In order to put my class at Ruskin Hall on the alert for analysis of sense, and as a preliminary exercise, I read to them an essay on Energy, from a collection of 'Civil Service Essays'. The sentences were beautifully balanced, and I tried to do them justice. I then asked each member of the class in turn what he thought of the essay, and all, except one, were agreed that it was 'very fine'. Why? 'Because it sounded so well.' The exceptional pupil said 'he didn't see much in it', and I concurred. It was then the turn of the class to cross-examine, and for me to justify myself; and we decided to analyse one or two of the passages together. Here is one: 'What serious-minded man ever travels in a railway carriage without reflecting on the energy of a Watt

or a Stephenson?' The author obviously intends us to reply—None. Yet he knows perfectly well that hundreds and thousands of well-informed and serious-minded season-ticket holders travel by train every day without thinking about the energy of either Watt or Stephenson. That one lesson put the class extraordinarily on their mettle. The story is a sufficiently old one, but no one who has not seen for himself the effect of wind-bag orators on half-educated audiences can realize how important is teaching of this kind at the present time.

I followed up the lesson by reading other passages for the judgement of my students, sometimes from a great author, sometimes from an inferior one, but always keeping back my own view, so far as possible, until that of the class had been fully expressed. The exercise is no less well suited for boys and girls from the age of fourteen or fifteen than for adult pupils.

The next step in the systematic study of an author is best made in writing; and I applied the method of *précis* (confined in Government examinations to the dullest of official documents) to all kinds of literature—leaders in daily papers, political speeches,[1] the trial scene in Macaulay's 'Warren Hastings'; and I might have chosen chapters from the novels of Meredith, Hardy, Zangwill, or Anthony Hope. I prefer, on the whole, prose to poetry, and dramatic poetry to poetry of other kinds, for this exercise.

It is well to begin with something of contemporary, or at any rate not too remote, interest, so that the pupils may realize the more readily the object and audience of the author, and thus have a real basis for criticism at a later stage. The analysis and comparison of two articles on the same subject in journals appealing to widely different audiences will yield interesting and surprising results.

[1] The newspapers often issue excellent detailed analyses of long speeches, which will serve as a model.

It is necessary to prescribe the approximate reduction in scale which one desires, a precaution frequently omitted. A reduction to one-fifth or one-sixth of the original is generally suitable (e.g. from, say 3,000 to about 500 or 600 words); but, of course, the 'condensibility' of different authors, and, indeed, of different parts of the same piece, varies considerably. The teacher must himself decide as to the fullness of the summary he desires, and will do well to analyse the piece beforehand. He will also decide as to whether the summary is to be written in the form of chapter-headings (a form that I have found most useful) or as a piece of continuous prose.

In this kind of work the pupil learns quickly to distinguish between essentials and non-essentials. Thus the mention of the 'velvet cushions' of the House of Lords in the summary of the trial scene of 'Warren Hastings' promptly moved my class to laughter, as being entirely unessential to the main facts of the case. (The 'velvet cushions' might, of course, have been mentioned to suggest some particular train of thought, but this is not so in the essay.)

The first aim of the exercise is obviously to reveal the plan, conscious or unconscious, of the author. On one occasion my class who were, it so happened, nearly all Radicals, had, they told me, listened with great delight to the speech of a distinguished Liberal leader, and I suggested to them to summarize the first two columns of his speech as reported in the *Manchester Guardian*. They came back next week with the u expected but unanimous verdict, made plain by their summaries, that the speech was 'badly-composed'. I comforted them with the suggestion that a speech may sometimes be 'composed' to meet the changing moods of a volatile audience, and assured them that the distinguished orator in question would certainly not re-publish his speech as he had delivered it, to the damage

of his literary reputation. But their verdict showed conclusively that the members of the class were no longer content to submit their judgement to a popular opinion, or to their own first impressions.

Summaries of the kind to which I refer are clearly to be distinguished from paraphrase. It seems perfectly justifiable and right to ask pupils to show orally, by using words different from those of the original, that they understand in detail, a piece of great poetry or of great prose; but to ask them systematically to set their own English by the side of passages from Shakespeare or Shelley, from Bacon or Ruskin, and to allow them to be content with their work, is a sad business. If, instead of the work of the great masters, our teachers would choose, for this dismal exercise, imperfect verse or prose, which might fairly be improved by a pupil's paraphrase, it would be a different affair. Most pupils will, however, supply for this purpose a sufficient number of badly written passages in prose (and, if desired, in verse), of their own, without going to printed books for them.

There is, perhaps, one kind of paraphrase of a classical prose work that might be justified—the paraphrase of the endless periods of an author like Clarendon into modern English.

I am aware that some examiners demand paraphrase of poetry as necessary, in order to enable them to test the accuracy of the knowledge of their examinees. I should be disinclined to make the sacrifice for which they ask, and should request them, if I had the power, to turn the difficulty by resorting to some mode of interrogation less likely to be destructive of poetic taste and literary appreciation.[1]

[1] The article in the *School World* for February, 1906, by Mr. J. H. Fowler, of Clifton, whose judgement as a teacher is entitled to all respect, leaves me, I fear, unconvinced. Mr. Fowler, I gather, regards the pupil's paraphrase as a 'horrid example' which may be used to show off the beauty of the original. But this kind of exercise can only be used with extreme circumspection. No average boy or girl

The summarizing of a passage is only the first step towards complete analysis. It is now for the teacher to indicate the general setting of the passage in the work from which it is taken, the place of that work in the life-work of the author, and its historical and moral significance; to elicit, with the help of his class, if possible, the master-idea of the piece, and to criticize the success or failure of the author in carrying out his intention; and, further, to criticize, if need be, the authenticity of the text.

He will by this time have dealt with the general significance and matter of the piece, with the main questions of 'invention' and 'arrangement', but only with detailed expressions in so far as the understanding of the piece, as a whole, depends on the interpretation. He will now have to examine it more minutely. It is with the question of 'diction', or choice of words, that are indissolubly bound up the majority of those real and fascinating problems of style on which the impressionists have taught us no longer to dogmatize, but of which the generalized scientific treatment is yet in its infancy. The harmony of the sentence and the period; the charm, force, and appropriateness of images presented or suggested; the touches, more persuasive than logic, by which the author appeals to his audience, and the blows by which he drives them; these, and similar things, are the factors of style which the literary teacher of the present day is perhaps least likely to pass over.[1] There is one thing finally to be remembered: that the teacher, if he has learnt how to read well, has it in his own power to remove those cobwebs of the brain that are apt, after study, to obscure the first fair impression of a great work of art, in poetry or prose. The living voice promptly sweeps them away.

For such literary criticism as we have sketched in outline

will willingly devote much time or trouble to serving as a 'horrid example'.

[1] See Professor Walter Raleigh's *Style* (Edward Arnold).

to be first-rate of its kind, for it to be on the level of the classical teaching in our best secondary schools, preparation, and the preparation of years rather than of hours is, doubtless, needful. But the pains given so freely to Latin and Greek will surely not be grudged to the mother tongue.[1]

I cannot help adding one word more on the technical and practical value of such literary teaching, apart from the high intellectual interest, the keen and lasting pleasure, which come from the searching study of those whom the national appreciation has placed among its greatest thinkers and writers. It has a value, not only for those destined for literary pursuits, but for business men, even in business. For the maker of machines to be successful, he must have the imagination to deal not only with machines, but with men, and masses of men, whose actions and requirements are often determined by influences other than a surface self-interest. And the great writer is a great knower of men.

[1] M. F. Brunot, in the *Revue Universitaire* for May, 1892, and February, 1895, and M. J. Rudler, in his book *L'Explication française* (A. Colin), give interesting and erudite examples of literary criticism in class, well worthy of study.

CHAPTER V

LITERARY TRAINING AND SUPERFICIALITY. THE INFLUENCE OF EXAMINATIONS. SUGGESTIONS FOR REFORM. CONCLUSION

ONE very grave reproach has been frequently levelled against the results of the French system, to which attention must now be drawn.

The French, it is said, are as superficial and verbose as they are clear. The accusation of shallowness, when made by shallow and muddy writers on behalf of shallow muddiness, scarcely needs to be met; the accusation of verbosity, made by pseudo-concise authors whose concision is achieved at the expense of the reader's time, may be put aside; but when one competent French critic writes, '*notre enseignement tend plus à développer le beau parler que le bien parler*';[1] when another, criticizing the literary dissertations of the higher school forms, writes, '*Verbalisme creux, démarquage et plagiat, insincérité et abdication du sens propre, ou au contraire étourderie audacieuse à affirmer sans savoir: voilà les résultats je ne dis pas généraux mais trop fréquents de l'exercice que nous pratiquons*,'[2] we may well pause.

If clearness of style is a result of French training, is superficiality, we may ask, its necessary concomitant with the majority of those taught? Do we in England, avoiding clearness, also escape superficiality? I will take the second question first; and ask the reader to consider the

[1] M. Jules Payot, *Revue Universitaire* for April, 1898, p. 341.
[2] M. G. Lanson, *Études modernes dans l'enseignement secondaire*, in *L'Éducation de la Démocratie*, p. 173.

subjects of three essays set to boys under fourteen at an English public school famous for its intellectual education:—

(*a*) It is Character more than Intellect that makes men great.
(*b*) Which is the greatest of the Sciences? Give reasons.

and, as a crowning mercy,

(*c*) What is Progress in a nation? Give instances of True and False Progress in Ancient and Modern History;

or the following, selected from recent school-leaving or University entrance examinations:—

Sympathy (time allowed, forty minutes).—The Rival Philosophies of Brutus and Cassius (time allowed, thirty minutes).—Wordsworth's Poetry and its Effects on Subsequent Literature (one of five questions to be answered in three hours).—The Sea (one of nine questions to be answered in three hours).—Modern Fiction.—What inference as to the moral order of this world may be drawn from Shakespeare's tragedies?—The Relative Influence of Individuality and Environment on the Formation of Character.

[No note is given in the Examination Papers from which the last three subjects are taken as to the time allowed for their treatment. We may assume that it did not exceed three hours.]

What can we expect, and what can we get, from the majority of boys in reply to demands made on them by such questions as these, but superficial nonsense of the worst kind? Imagine the discourse of a boy of thirteen on 'True and False Progress in Ancient and Modern History'! or of a boy of sixteen on 'The Rival Philosophies of Brutus and Cassius', written in thirty minutes, or on 'Modern Fiction', even if three hours were allowed for it. Such examples might be multiplied indefinitely. I have purposely abstained from giving precise references. To do so would be to attack particular persons or bodies where it is a system that is at fault.

So long as boys in France or in England are asked to

write on subjects of which they have no personal and first-hand knowledge *in a form implying personal judgement*, the result of such training must be superficiality and a grave weakening of the intellectual conscience.[1]

When a schoolboy, with knowledge necessarily limited, is asked to write on a subject of which his knowledge is not only limited, but also second-hand, and to address his discourse to the whole world of letters as if he were a Sainte-Beuve or a Macaulay, a Taine or a Matthew Arnold, what possible criterion can we have in judging of his production? How shall we define his object in writing, how shall we venture to ask if he has attained it? Such questions applied to the 'Progress' essay or the 'Character' essay provoke a smile. But when we are forced to smile at the teaching in our best secondary schools, at the tests used in selecting men for our public services, and in determining professional careers, the matter is serious.

The question—Is superficiality a necessary result of the training required to produce clearness of expression?—has been already answered implicitly in the preceding pages.

It is possible to practise boys in writing in such a way as entirely to avoid the defects both of the English essay and of the French literary speech or *dissertation*. We have, indeed, but to bear in mind that in the first place there is a large range of subjects of which our pupils have personal knowledge, on which they may write with the full authority of that knowledge, and on which their judgement and power of clear statement may be exercised; and, in the second, that, if we wish to extend the scope of our subjects, we may give material to our pupils and ask them to treat it critically in a particular way which does not imply previous

[1] 'I think', writes Professor Percy Gardner, with reference not to the school essay, but to the Oxford essay, 'that to set men to write on subjects about which they know little, and about which, under the conditions, they can learn but little, is not merely inexpedient but radically immoral.' *Oxford at the Cross Roads*, 1903, p. 32.

knowledge. M. Lanson, who thinks that the old ideal of teaching schoolboys as if the object were to train literary artists and critics is bound to disappear from French school life, advocates as the model of French composition in future 'not the academic discourse, nor an article of Paradol or Lemaître, but the report of affairs (*le rapport d'affaires*), the exact exposition, ordered and luminous, without eloquence or poetry or literary artifice, of a definite question, of which the solution depends on a choice and examination of facts'.

Is not such a remedy, recommended by one of the most brilliant and solid of French literary teachers, to the British taste? Would it not replace to advantage the literary doses which we have hitherto administered to our pupils with the irresponsibility, if not the ill-will, of Mr. Squeers?

We have considered the lessons to be learnt from France. Let us now turn to an influence in English schools far more potent in fashioning the style and in determining the whole trend of thought of our pupils than essay-writing, an influence all the more potent because one of its more grotesque aspects has, I believe, hitherto escaped the attention of our educational authorities: I mean the influence of examinations. I do not wish here to break a lance against examinations in general. While they are irrational as guides, they are indispensable as tests, of education. They must be rationalized, they must be watched, and where they exert a disturbing influence on education, that influence must be carefully counteracted.

Now, the influence of examinations on writing and on thought-training is, in the main, an evil one, and in two ways. In the first place, they tend to paralyse the powers of exposition. The mental attitude enforced on the examinee is the slightly ridiculous attitude, for a writer, of a person obliged to give information to some one who already possesses it. In everyday life you are silent in the

presence of a person better acquainted with a subject than yourself. It is only in the examination-room that you tell the better-informed person, your examiner, what he already knows, and what he is often intensely bored to be told again. If you are a wise person and clever examinee, you allude, you hint, you suggest, you convey your knowledge in the briefest possible form, that is, in a form totally unintelligible to the previously uninitiated. Is it any wonder that, with this topsy-turvy training brought to perfection, so many brilliant examinees are incapable in everyday life of explaining themselves to everyday people, who, unlike examiners, are not already acquainted with what they have to say? Is it any wonder that the business clerk cannot write a business letter; that the military officer cannot give clear instructions to his juniors? Have they not been carefully trained by the examination system in the art of unintelligibility? That is one evil—a terrible evil from the point of view of efficiency—which is largely due to the effect of examinations, uncounteracted by other training. The intelligent person untrained by examinations expresses himself better than the person trained by examinations.

But there is an evil still more serious, if less grotesque, for which, if it is not wholly responsible, the examination system is, I believe, largely responsible. We have seen that the training in the mother tongue should have as its object not only the cultivation of the powers of exposition, but, above all, the development of intellectual initiative. The examination, the all-powerful influence which forces the work of each student into a mould that shall please another person, his examiner, rather than himself, tends, and must tend, to destroy intellectual initiative.

It would be ungrateful not to call attention here to Professor H. E. Armstrong's devoted and untiring efforts during the last twenty years to infuse into our education, by means of experimental work, something more of the individual

and of the scientific spirit, or, as he prefers to call it, the 'heuristic method'.[1] But Professor Armstrong's crusade directly raises the question whether the physical and natural sciences actually offer the best material for initiation into methods of scientific inquiry and research now fully recognized as belonging to every domain of human thought.

It is clear that the repetition of apparently simple experiments, which it took some great genius to devise, even when the pupil is left to draw his own conclusions from them, can hardly be called original work. To be original in any subject one must first have acquired some technical mastery of it and be able freely to devise new experiments for oneself; to know how to ask one's own questions as well as to answer them. A boy of twelve or fourteen can scarcely be original in chemistry or physics; he can, I venture to think, be both scientific and original in his use of the mother tongue.[2]

Science, in the view of the great German physicist, Kirchhoff, and his numerous and brilliant disciples, consists in an accurate and simple description of nature. If this be the method of science, it is the method of good literature also, which differs only from that of science in the appeal beyond (though not against) common sense to an individual experience, sometimes not to be repeated or verified.

In the schools we need not be afraid of this personal element, so long as we make sure that it is sincere, and not

[1] See *The Teaching of Scientific Method, and other Papers on Education*, by H. E. Armstrong, F.R.S. (Macmillan, 1903).

[2] I should be sorry to appear in any way to discourage the teaching of physical science in schools. It appears to me not only invaluable as a means of cultivating exact observation and the faculty of verifying a statement, but essential in order to give the pupils an intelligent interest in the many things of daily life in which physical science is involved. But much of the teaching should be, I venture to think, frankly incomplete, and without any attempt to give proofs which must be either beyond the grasp of the schoolboy or simplified by the omission of fundamentals.

borrowed from a book. Insincerity of this kind will betray itself almost invariably by inconsistency. The pupil's landscape will be (as I have seen it, in certain model compositions) lurid in the setting sun at the top of the page, while the dewdrops on the grass are simultaneously silvered by the moon at the bottom. The composition class itself, judiciously guided, will promptly cure its members of literary insincerity and false rhetoric.

Urgent Reforms

The introduction of the systematic teaching of the mother tongue into English education implies changes in (1) the school time-table and curriculum, (2) the training of teachers, (3) the examination system. Certain changes are necessary at once. These changes will in course of time involve others which will come naturally and of themselves. I propose to deal briefly, under the three headings given above, with changes which may be regarded as urgent.

Time-table and Curriculum

In elementary and higher elementary schools in which the number of subjects taught is limited, I do not think that there will be any difficulty in finding the time necessary to teach the mother tongue rationally even if four or five hours a week, the amount given to the mother tongue on the 'modern' side of many French and German schools, were demanded for it. In the French higher elementary boys' schools five hours a week are given to French in the first year by all boys; in the 'general' or more literary section five hours are given weekly in the second year, and four in the third; in the commercial, industrial, and agricultural sections two hours are given weekly in each of the second and third years.

The case of secondary education is different. Every one

knows the difficulty of the time-table in secondary schools. While the number of hours in the week remains limited, the claims of 'new subjects' are always more urgent and pressing. What amount of time can and should be given to the mother tongue? English is fortunately (though some teachers will not have it so) a language simple in syntax and grammar. Indeed the grammar is so simple that much of the time now spent on teaching it is devoted to obsolete forms which the ordinary boy will never meet with, and of which a knowledge might well be imparted either incidentally (and apart from any examinational test) or reserved until the University standard is reached.

Everything will depend, of course, on the precise object of the teaching. If it is to be our object to make of each boy a budding philologist, or a walking textbook with lists of exceptions at his finger-ends, such as most boys learned until recently in beginning modern languages, it is obvious that the time required for English grammar alone would be comparable with the time now required for Latin grammar. But if, on the other hand, we recognize the fact that it is the living language that is chiefly to be studied, that what we want to give is a mastery and comprehension of the use of English in modern literature and in daily life, our requirements as expressed in hours of the time-table will become much more modest. The grammar may be limited in the first instance to the simplest accidence and syntax, with parsing and simple analysis. The history of the language may well be given incidentally and not taught as a subject for the examination-room.

The centre of the English teaching will be the teaching of composition. The pupils will be asked to write (as a rule, for a particular audience and with a particular object in view) on subjects within the range of their own knowledge, and to criticize their own work.

They will also be asked to write summaries of passages

sufficiently long (consisting, say, of not less than 1,500 or 2,000 words) in order to exercise their power of distinguishing between essential and unessential details and of determining the plan of the piece selected.[1]

From the age of eleven or twelve to sixteen or seventeen not less than one hour of school-work and not less than two or three hours' home-work will be devoted on an average in each week to actual composition.

In English literature the pupils will study not only the poets, but the great prose-writers of modern times. (I quote as examples, and with no pretence at giving a full list: Swift, Johnson, Goldsmith, Fielding, Hume, Burke, Sheridan, Gibbon, Scott, Jane Austen, Landor, Macaulay, Newman, Thackeray, Dickens, Mrs. Gaskell, George Eliot, Froude, Matthew Arnold, Huxley.) A certain number of complete works will be studied, and a suitable prose-anthology will be used for the study of authors of whom no entire work is selected. The attention of the pupils will be directed to general sense and content rather than to exceptional linguistic detail or to incidental allusions, other than those essential for the comprehension of the author. Literary history will not be taught in set lessons apart from the texts submitted to the class, but the pupils will be furnished with some good manual of literature for reference.

For a scheme of this kind to be carried out, a minimum of two hours' school-work a week might be tried experimentally. In the case of boys receiving literary training in classical or foreign languages, three would certainly suffice.

When we come to consider how these two or three hours in school, together with their essential accompaniment of two or three hours' home-work, are to be won from the time now devoted to other subjects, we must keep in view

[1] See p. 65, above.

not only the intrinsic importance of English, but also the fact that the lessons in systematic thinking and clearness of exposition given in the English class-room are bound to ease the work in every other subject except, possibly, that in which clearness and system are already regarded as of paramount necessity—mathematics. It is obviously not possible to say, generally, at the expense of what other subject, if any, the mother tongue should be taught. That is a matter for the authorities of each school, or class of school, to decide.

A solution of the question which would involve a minimum disturbance of the time-table has been suggested by Professor Armstrong, who proposes that English composition should be taught incidentally by the teachers of the general subjects of the curriculum. That suggestion, if carried out, would, I fear, inevitably lead back again, through casual treatment of the subject, to fresh systematic neglect. Casual exercises and hints given by teachers of science, of history, of geography, &c., if added to the systematic teaching of English given by a master whose business it is to watch the progress of each individual pupil, would be of the greatest assistance; they could not replace that teaching.

On the other hand it seems to me of extreme importance that we should not create a specialist class of teachers for English composition alone.

Training of Teachers

Two classes of teachers have to be considered, elementary and secondary.

The recent memorandum of the Consultative Committee of the Board of Education on the requirements of higher elementary schools, assigns a foremost place in the curriculum to the mother tongue, and incidentally refers to the misconceptions which at present prevail with regard to the

teaching of English among elementary teachers.[1] I believe that the mere removal of those misconceptions would greatly increase the efficiency of those who are now engaged in active teaching. But it would be advisable for County Councils, and other local bodies responsible for the conduct of elementary schools, to institute holiday-courses for teachers in English similar to the holiday-courses for science-teachers given annually at the Royal College of Science, South Kensington. Such courses might well be associated with other courses on recent advances in educational theory and practice, to which a certain number of teachers would be admitted each year, without deduction from their ordinary vacation.

Many of the best elementary teachers will, of course, learn their business in the Training Colleges. It is for the authorities of the Colleges to remember that the creation of a new tradition requires teachers who are capable of pioneer work.

The case of secondary teachers is different.

On the one hand, the literary teaching will be pushed in a secondary school far beyond the point attainable in a primary school. A master, in the higher forms of a secondary school, although not required to teach either English philology or literary history, will need a fair grasp of these subjects as an essential part of his own equipment, and to form a basis for his treatment of individual authors. On the other hand, it is to be remembered that not a few of the best masters in our schools already possess this equipment, and that a very large number, owing to their classical training, are in a position to acquire it for themselves.

Those teachers who avail themselves, after taking a degree in classics or history, of the 'Secondary Training

[1] Board of Education: *Report of the Consultative Committee upon Higher Elementary Schools*, 1906; see pp. 39, 44.

Department' of a University may well spend part of their time in the scientific study of English philology and literature. The day will no doubt come when evidence of knowledge of these subjects will be imperatively required of those teachers who are to be entrusted with the higher teaching of English in secondary schools.

EXAMINATIONS

It has often been pointed out that the familiar elementary examination paper in history or geography, &c., with its ten or twelve questions to be answered in three hours, is apt, despite the ingenuity of examiners, to become a mere memory test, and the replies bald reproductions of text-book information. Examination papers of this kind are the subject of comment, by both continental and English critics, not pleasant to our ears. English critics have offered no remedy; continental ones are mostly unaware of the root of our difficulties. If we analyse the rationale of such papers we find that we have to deal with (1) the legitimate desire of examiners to test the range of the candidates' knowledge, (2) their inability to test its depth, owing to the incapacity of the students to express themselves with any approach to continuity.

To set fewer questions, requiring longer answers and capable of really testing the power of reflection and exposition of the candidates, would in most cases be to 'pluck' the vast majority, and for a fault that is the fault of their teaching and not their own.

There is, of course, no reason why examination papers should not continue to include a certain number of questions requiring brief answers and designed to test range of knowledge rather than depth, although, where it is practicable, oral examination is better suited to this kind of test and will be universally applicable when our pupils have been

trained to speak of what they know without undue nervousness.

On the other hand, with increased mastery of exposition, students will have no reason to fear the question which, to be answered properly, demands, as well as memory, thought and the power of arranging facts.[1]

There is one special class of examinations of great practical importance, which a better training in the use of the mother tongue would allow us immensely to improve. I mean entrance examinations of medium difficulty, of which the central object is not to test attainment in a number of subjects, but fitness to enter on a particular career, a career in which the knowledge of the majority of the subjects of the examination will be required only incidentally: examinations to test general capacity rather than specialist knowledge. Such an examination is the entrance examination for the army.[2] Hitherto the test of the English essay in an entrance examination of this kind has been regarded chiefly as a test in spelling, punctuation, and the power to write single sentences grammatically, and, we may presume, with some attempt at continuity. A not infrequent demand at the heading of essay papers is that attention should be paid to spelling and punctua-

[1] The writer has discussed this subject in greater detail in an article on 'Universities, Schools, and Examinations', published in the *University Review* for July, 1906.

[2] I have mentioned the entrance examination for the army specifically. The extent of the actual requirements in English in this, as in so many other examinations, may be estimated from the ambition of the demands. The candidates are required to write on *three* subjects in an hour and a half, of which I quote the following, set in March, 1906:—

The Work of England in Egypt; Some of the reasons why Shakespeare is accounted a great dramatist; Yachting; Napoleon Bonaparte; Was life more enjoyable in the Middle Ages than at present? Should capital punishment be abolished? A day in camp; The advantages which a country derives from its colonies.

The treatment of such subjects in the time given, without any limitation of object or audience, can scarcely be other than insignificant in most cases.

tion! It may, I think, be fairly assumed that the British schoolboy is not less intelligent than his foreign comrade; and that, if we give the necessary time to English, the vast majority of candidates sent in for an entrance examination such as that for the army will not only be able to spell and punctuate respectably from sheer force of habit, but also be able to express themselves with sufficient freedom to enable us to ascertain the one thing which, after character, we want most to know about candidates for the public service, the one thing which our more elementary entrance examinations signally fail to test, that is, whether they have common-sense, intellectual tact, readiness, and order.

In our competitive examinations, in order to ensure perfect impartiality, we take the greatest possible care to conceal from the examiners the identity of the candidates, to withhold from them all extrinsic knowledge of their training and experience, all that personal knowledge which a business man would regard as essential in the appointment of a member of his staff. The system, given the weakness of human nature which it so fully recognizes, may be the right one. But is it not then obvious that the examination itself must be organized so as to give, as far as possible, the information withheld in other ways? It has been said that every man, in writing, involuntarily betrays more of himself than he knows. The written stutter of present-day examinees betrays little enough. I once heard a school examiner say, 'You can't mark for sense in English composition.' It is unfortunately almost true at present. But the essay, the test of sense, with candidates able to write, may and ought to be made the central test of entrance examinations for the services. The test, properly carried out, is one in which no cramming could produce illusory or transitory results. I believe that it should be entrusted, in examinations of this kind, not to the specialist, likely to pay undue attention to elegance of phrase or detail,

but rather to the well-educated business man or administrator, experienced in judging affairs and men. The prediction may be hazarded that with such a test the selection of candidates would differ considerably from the present selection; those at the top (say, the first third of the successful candidates) would probably remain at the top, but in a different order; there would possibly be some striking changes in the fate of the second third; while a considerable number of candidates in the last third would fail, and be replaced by men whose judgement is superior to their memory, and on whom the artificial conditions of the examination-room must in any circumstances inflict an injustice.

CONCLUSION

My final appeal in this matter is not to the schoolmaster, but to the parent, whose control over secondary education is greater than he thinks; and to the community, awakened to a need for that 'efficiency' which only too easily remains an empty watchword and merely rouses a slumberer here and there, who, like the boy in the story, turns over and goes to sleep once more.

That there is something gravely wrong with our secondary education is the conclusion of many observers. By some process, Sir Oliver Lodge tells us, 'the eager and inquiring child' is turned, by present-day education, or turns himself, into 'the intellectually dull, apathetic, indolent, professional schoolboy.'[1] Mr. A. C. Benson, after eighteen years of teaching in the premier English school, bears the same witness in almost the same words.[2]

Is the indictment too sweeping? It may be so. But let us look at certain facts of a magnitude not to be denied or ignored. It is, I believe, universally admitted

[1] *School Teaching and School Reform*, 1905, p. 9.
[2] *From a College Window*, 1906, in the essay on 'Education', p. 155.

that there is one organized body of men who, taken as a whole, are superior in resourcefulness and efficiency to any other in the country,—the officers of the navy. Now, the regulations limiting the age of entrance to the navy in the past (and they have lately become more stringent) have made it impossible for any naval officer to have passed through a public school. Is it not a very grave indictment against our present secondary education that it is among the men who have not been submitted to its influence that we find the most efficient and resourceful body in the country? Does not this suggest that the influence of the secondary schools of to-day is, at least for many of their pupils, a sterilizing influence?

There is a magnificent passage in Rousseau's *Émile*, in which he contrasts the qualities of the savage and the peasant: on the one hand, the quickness of the savage, untroubled by the allotted task, obeying no one, a law to himself, but forced to reason in every action of his life, and obliged at each moment and each step to consider its consequences; on the other, the slowness of the peasant, doing what he has been taught to do, what he has seen his father do, and what he has been ordered to do, following the life almost of an automaton, in which habit and obedience take the place of reason.

There you have the theory of a philosopher of the eighteenth century; can we not see an illustration tragically to the point in the war that closed the nineteenth, in which our own officers and men, the equals or superiors of their opponents in discipline and courage, were, in so many instances, shown to be their inferiors precisely in the qualities of reason and intellectual initiative?

Is it not obvious that in the exigencies of pioneer life, and in the hard training for the navy, there is an element almost totally lacking in our secondary education of the present day, and one which it needs all our thought and

care to introduce, not only into the department of intellectual training with which I have dealt, but also into the department of manual training?

Lord Rosebery declared, not long since, that the need of independent thought was the most clamant need of the nation.

The question of the teaching of the mother tongue and of the thought training, which such teaching ought to imply, is no mere question of school routine. It is a national question. The greatness of England, Mr. Sadler has justly said, rests on sea-power and school-power. We need to develop the individual faculties of each child to the utmost for the sake of the nation; and not only for the nation, but because he is an individual. It is a personal duty, and a national duty, for each of us to look to it that no child has his mental initiative crushed by the Juggernaut of a misconceived educational system.

The primary responsibility in this matter rests on the parents. To the demands that they make the teachers of England will respond.

NOTE A

THE USE OF CLASSICAL LANGUAGES AS AN INSTRUMENT FOR THE TEACHING OF ENGLISH (see p. 4)

I quote in full Dr. Rendall's views; they are representative.

'The subjects upon which stress is laid [in the qualifying examination for Sandhurst] are English and History; Latin is excluded. I would like to say a word about that, because one of the speakers, Mr. Hartog, has dwelt upon the great necessity of teaching the mother tongue. He said that they teach the mother tongue in France and in Germany, and therefore we should teach the mother tongue in England.

'Of course to a certain extent I sympathize with the contention, but let us clearly understand that the position of the French and German people with regard to the mother tongue is very different educationally from the position of the English with regard to their mother tongue, for the simple reason that the English instinct for language is on the whole more slovenly, more slipshod, and less sensitive than in any other European language. English has divested itself of accidence, and has done the most that any language can to divest itself of syntax. Consequently, training in English is less effectual as an educational instrument than in French or German. The natural insensitiveness of the English mind to the graces and delicacies of language has been very largely redeemed and helped by the fidelity of the English to classical training. The greatness of our literature and poetry rests much on the fidelity of the English people to classical training in Latin and Greek, and it is an implement of education with which we can very little afford to dispense.' (*Journal of the Royal United Service Institution* for 1905, p. 655.)

Thring went so far as to say that it was 'scarcely possible to speak the English language with accuracy or precision without a knowledge of Latin and Greek.' To arguments of this kind, and especially to the arguments in favour of translation as the supreme method of teaching the mother tongue, Henry Sidgwick, in his essay on the 'Theory of Classical Education',[1] gives an admirable reply, from which I quote only a single passage:—

'Translation is continually straining and stretching our faculty of language in many ways, and so necessarily imparts to it a high degree of vigour; but the precise power that will be of most use to us for the purposes of life, it does not, by itself, give, and it even causes us to form habits adverse to the acquirement of that power. Teaching the art of Rhetoric by means of translation only is like teaching a man to climb trees in order that he may be an elegant dancer' [or, one might add, like teaching a man to box by exercise with the skipping-rope only].

It is only fair to Thring to point out that if he attached undue value to translation he strongly advocated the teaching of English composition as a means of cultivating the 'seeing eye'. (*Theory and Practice of Teaching*, 1883, pp. 232–5.)

NOTE B

JOHN BRINSLEY THE ELDER ON THE ART OF WRITING ENGLISH LETTERS (1612)

I quote the following passages from Chapter XII of John Brinsley the Elder's *Ludus Literarius: or the Grammar Schoole . . .*, 1612, entitled:—

'How to make Epistles imitating Tully, short, pithie,

[1] Originally published in *Essays on a Liberal Education*, edited by F. W. Farrar, 1867, and republished in the posthumous collection of *Miscellaneous Essays and Addresses*, by H. Sidgwick (Macmillan, 1904); see pp. 281–97.

sweete Latine and familiar; and to indite Letters to our friends in English accordingly.'

Spoudeus, the inquirer in Brinsley's dialogue, says (p. 166):—

'. . . As for inditing Letters in English, I haue not exercised my schollars in them at all; neyther haue I knowne them to be vsed in Schooles: although they cannot but bee exceeding necessary for schollars; being of perpetuall vse in our whole life, and of very great commendation, when they are so performed. Therefore I still craue your helping hand to direct me, how to bring my schollars to the attayning that faculty.'

To this Philoponus, the reformer, replies [I only quote the part concerning English]:—

'3. Cause them for their exercise to make another Epistle in imitation of Tullies Epistle, vsing al the phrases and matter of that Epistle; onely applying and turning it to some friend, as if they had the very same occasion then presently: and also changing numbers, tenses, persons, places, times: yet so, as thereby to make all the matter and phrases, each way most familiar to them, and fully their owne.

'And first let them doe this in a good English stile, as was said; I meane in making an English Letter first: setting it after the manner, as they did their English Translation; of that page of their booke towards the left hand, or on the first columne, the Latin on the other ouer against it, sentence for sentence.

'Herein they are only to differ from the Translations, that they doe not in these Letters sticke so much to wordes, to answere word for word both English and Latine; as to write purely and sweetly, as well in English as in Latine, and to express their mindes most fully in both, and in most familiar manner.

'4. The next day to make another Epistle, as being sent

from their friend to whom they writ, in answere to that which they writ the former day: and in that to answere euery sentence from point to point, in as short a manner as the former Epistle was, stil reteyning the same phrases as much as they can. I will take for example the first Epistle of Sturmius [i.e. of Sturm's Collection of Cicero's letters]. The more easie it is for the children, the better it is.'

Brinsley then quotes a letter of Cicero (written to his wife Terentia on September 1, 47 B.C.),[1] with a summary in English, and gives the following two examples of English letters for his pupils. The first barely differs in sense from the letter of Cicero.

An English Letter in imitation of Tully

'If you be in health, it is well; I am in health.[2] I haue long looked for your Messengers *. When they shall come, I shal be more certaine what I am to do; and then I will forthwith certifie you of all things. See that you looke very carefully to your health.'

* Letter carriers.

The Answere

'I reioyce greatly of your health. I am sory that you haue looked for the Carriers so long. They wil be with you very shortly, & then indeede you shal be more certain

[1] Letter ccccxlvii in *The Correspondence of M. Tullius Cicero*, ed. R. Y. Tyrrell and L. C. Purser, vol. iv, 1894.

[2] It would be interesting to determine whether Cicero's formula 'si vales, bene est; ego valeo' has, through Brinsley, served as the origin of the corresponding English formula for beginning a letter, almost universal among certain classes—'Hoping this finds you well as it leaves me'. On one occasion a maid of friends of mine received a letter which began: 'Dear —, I hope this will find you well, as it leaves us, except brother William who is dying.'

what to do. Wee shall forthwith looke to hear of all your matters. I will in the meantime looke to my health, as you aduise. Farewell.'

NOTE C

Locke on the Teaching of Rhetoric

'Do but consider', Locke writes, with regard to the Latin theme, 'what it is, in making a theme, that a young lad is employed about; it is to make a speech on some Latin saying, as *omnia vincit amor;* or *non licet in bello bis peccare,* &c. And here . . . the poor lad must set his invention on the rack, to say something where he knows nothing . . .' (*Thoughts on Education*, Quick's edition, § 171). 'If boys' invention be to be quickened by such an exercise, let them', he says, 'make themes in English, where they have facility' (loc. cit., § 173). Sections 188 and 189 would deserve to be quoted in full. One more passage may perhaps be given. 'There can scarce be a greater defect in a gentleman than not to express himself well either in writing or speaking. But yet I think I may ask my reader, whether he doth not know a great many, who live upon their estates, and so with the name should have the qualities of gentlemen, who cannot so much as tell a story as they should, much less speak clearly and persuasively in any business. This, I think, not to be so much their fault, as the fault of their education; for I must, without partiality, do my countrymen this right, that where they apply themselves, I see none of their neighbours outgo them. They have been taught Rhetorick, but yet never taught how to express themselves handsomely with their tongues or pens in the language they are always to use; as if the names of the figures that embellished the discourses of those who understood the art of speaking, were the very

art and skill of speaking well' (§ 189). He goes on to recommend that children should first be made 'often to tell a story of anything they know', and, when they can tell stories pretty well, made to write them ; that they should then study the rules of composition in the first book of Cicero's *De Inventione*, and that 'when they understand how to write English with due connexion, propriety, and order, and are pretty well masters of a tolerable narrative style', they should be advanced to the writing of letters, in which they should be 'taught to express their own plain easy sense'.

NOTE D

THE *RATIO STUDIORUM* OF THE JESUITS

A first edition of the *Ratio Studiorum*, drawn up by six Jesuits of various nationalities and issued in 1586 ('Ratio atque Institutio Studiorum per Sex Patres ad id iussu R. P. Praepositi Generalis deputatos conscripta') was condemned ; it differs considerably from the edition of 1599.

Father G. M. Pachtler, S.J., has published a large number of documents relating to Jesuit education, including the editions of the *Ratio* of 1586, 1599, and 1832, translations of the two later editions, and explanatory matter, under the title *Ratio Studiorum et Institutiones Scholasticae Societatis Jesu* . . ., 2 vols., Berlin, 1887 (as part of the *Monumenta Germaniae Paedagogica*). The text of 1599 is not in the British Museum. I have, therefore, in the passages quoted in Note E below, used Pachtler's text in preference to that of 1606, from which it differs only in small points, mainly of punctuation.

M. H. Ferté has published a French translation of the *Ratio* under the title *Programme et Règlement des Études de*

la Société de Jésus . . . comprenant les modifications faites en 1832 *et* 1858 (Hachette, 1902) and also translations of the two valuable books on teaching by the Jesuit, Joseph Jouvency [1643–1719], *De Ratione Discendi et Docendi* and the *Candidatus Rhetoricae*, under the titles *De la Manière d'apprendre et d'enseigner* (Hachette, second edition, 1900) and *L'Élève de Rhétorique* (Hachette, 1892).

The *Candidatus Rhetoricae* gives interesting examples of the *chria* used by the Jesuits which, except in so far as it occasionally dealt with actions as well as sayings, had become practically assimilated to the *sententia* of Quintilian. The use of the *chria* was continued in Germany down to the nineteenth century, probably through the influence of Jesuit schools. Dr. Ernst Laas, in his shrewd and learned but over-complex work, *Der deutsche Aufsatz in der ersten Gymnasial-Klasse* (*Prima*), 1868, p. 141 et seq., gives a severe criticism of the *chria* as used in German teaching.[1]

NOTE E

EXTRACTS FROM THE *RATIO STUDIORUM*

The following extract describes the shorter exercises of the Jesuits:—

'While the master corrects the written work, the exercises set to the pupils will be to imitate, for instance, a passage from a poet or an orator; to compose some description, as of gardens, temples, a storm, or things of this

[1] Abridged treatises on rhetoric were appended to English grammars during the eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth centuries. But I have only come across a single indication of the systematic application of the principles of rhetoric to English composition in an English school, given by Sir Walter Besant in his account of the Stockwell Grammar School about the year 1850 (see his *Autobiography*, p. 66). Other isolated instances of such teaching are no doubt to be found.

kind; to turn a phrase in different ways; to translate Greek prose into Latin or vice versa; to express Latin verse in Latin prose or Greek verse in Greek prose; to turn one form of poem into another; to construct epigrams, inscriptions, or epitaphs; to cull sentences from good orators or poets, Greek or Latin; to apply the figures of rhetoric to given subjects; to derive from rhetorical commonplaces and stock examples a multitude of arguments for any subject; and to do other exercises of this kind.'[1]

The following relates to the long composition done once a month:—

'An argument for an essay is to be dictated either as a whole at the beginning of the month, or in weekly portions (but each essay is to be completed within the month), with brief indications as to the general treatment of the whole, the commonplaces to be used in confirmation or in amplification, the chief rhetorical figures of which use may be made, and, if it seems advisable, a few passages from good authors to be imitated. From time to time, the master, after indicating an author who is to serve as a model for the pupils' composition, will give out merely the title.'[2]

The following passage shows the Jesuit method of discussing a literary text:—

'But when a piece of prose or a poem is to be explained, the meaning of the piece, if it is obscure, is first to be expounded, and the various interpretations discussed. In the

[1] 'Exercitationes discipulorum, dum scripta Magister corrigit, erunt exempli gratia: locum aliquem poëtae, vel oratoris imitari; descriptionem aliquam, ut hortorum, templorum, tempestatis, et similium, efficere; phrasim eandem modis pluribus variare; graecam orationem latine vertere aut contra, poëtae versus tum latine, tum graece, soluto stylo complecti; carminis genus aliud in aliud commutare; epigrammata, inscriptiones, epitaphia condere; phrases ex bonis oratoribus et poëtis, seu graecas seu latinas, excerpere; figuras rhetoricas ad certas materias accommodare; ex locis rhetoricis et topicis plurima ad rem quampiam argumenta depromere, et alia generis ejusdem.' *Ratio Studiorum. Regulae professoris rhetoricae*, § 5.

[2] 'Dictandum argumentum orationis vel initio cujusque mensis totum, vel singulis hebdomadis per partes (singulis enim mensibus ad summum singulae absolvendae orationes). Sit autem breve, quod per omnes eat orationis partes; locos confirmationis et amplificationis,

next place, the whole artistic construction, including invention of arguments, arrangement, and diction, is to be investigated: e. g. with what skill the author has insinuated his argument into the mind of his audience, whether his discourse is suited to his matter, from what sources he derives the arguments by which he seeks to persuade, or to ornament his discourse, or to move his audience; how many common maxims he brings together in the same passage [?], how he introduces arguments in figurative forms to secure belief, or weaves together individual figures of speech with rhetorical forms of expression. In the third place, passages similar either in matter or in words are to be quoted; and poets or orators who have made use of the same maxim to persuade their audience of a similar thing, or [merely] in narration, are to be referred to. In the fourth place, the argument itself is to be confirmed, where this is possible, by the sayings of wise men. In the fifth place, the teacher should seek for matter in history, fable, or learning of any kind, that will embellish the text. Finally, careful attention is to be given to the words used, to their propriety, beauty, variety, and harmony. The foregoing rules are not quoted for the teacher to make use of them all on each occasion, but with a view to his selecting those which may seem most appropriate to the matter in hand.'[1]

The model 'Explication de texte' given by Rollin in his *Traité des Études* (Bk. II, chap. iii), in spite of his desire for reform, is far from reaching the ideal which puts the analysis of sense and structure first and verbal criticism last.

figuras praecipuas, quae adhiberi possent, locos etiam aliquos bonorum auctorum ad imitandum, si videbitur, indicet. Interdum demonstrato scriptore aliquo, ad cujus imitationem orationem informent, verbo tenus res proponatur.' *Ratio Studiorum. Regulae professoris rhetoricae*, § 9.

[1] 'Si vero explicetur oratio vel poëma, primo exponenda sententia, si obscura sit, et variae interpretationes dijudicandae.—Secundo tota artificii ratio: inventionis sc., dispositionis et elocutionis exploranda, quam apte se orator insinuet, quam apposite dicat, vel quibus ex locis argumenta sumat ad persuadendum, ad ornandum, ad movendum; quam multa saepe praecepta uno eodem loco permisceat; quo pacto rationem ad faciendam fidem figuris sententiarum includat, rursusque figuras sententiarum figuris verborum intexat.—Tertio loci aliquot tum re tum verbis similes afferendi, aliique oratores, vel poëtae,

Professor Foster Watson, in the *School World* for January and February, 1906, has given an interesting account of the method of dealing with texts used by Thomas Horne, Head Master of Tonbridge School (and later of Eton), in his book *Χειραγωγία, sive Manuductio in Aedem Palladis*, &c., 1641.

NOTE F

I. The Method of Father Grégoire Girard

II. M. Payot's Articles on the Teaching of Composition

I

Father Grégoire Girard [1765–1850], a Franciscan, who from 1804 to 1823 was head of the French Elementary School at Fribourg, in Switzerland, did not publish until 1844–7 the remarkable method which he had worked out for the teaching of the mother tongue. In his *De l'enseignement régulier de la langue maternelle* . . .,[1] he gives an account of the origin and general principles of the method. During an inspection of the school of Pestalozzi at Yverdun, he protested against the excessive use made by Pestalozzi of mathematics in his teaching. Pestalozzi said to him, 'I want my children to believe nothing that cannot

qui eodem praecepto ad aliquid simile persuadendum vel narrandum usi sint, producendi.—Quarto res ipsae sapientum sententiis, si res ferat, confirmandae.—Quinto ex historia, ex fabulis, ex omni eruditione quae ad locum exornandum faciant conquirenda. Ad extremum verba perpendenda, eorum proprietas, ornatus, copia, numerus observandus.—Haec autem non ideo allata sunt, ut semper omnia consectetur Magister, sed ut ex iis seligat quae opportuniora videbuntur.' *Ratio Studiorum. Regulae professoris rhetoricae*, § 8.

[1] Paris, 1844; 2nd edit. 1846. The book was translated into English, and published in 1847 under the editorship of Viscount Ebrington, M.P., as *The Mother Tongue*.

be demonstrated as certainly as that two and two make four.' Girard's remonstrance against an exaggeration of statement 'not rare with this man of genius and of fire' led to an explanation, and finally to agreement on this point between the two great teachers (according to Girard's account).

Girard first substituted for Pestalozzi's method of demonstration of mathematical rules, a system by which the rules were deduced by the pupils themselves from the solution of graduated problems 'brought to school by the monitors'. He next extended this inductive method to the problems of grammar, and, 'in opposition to what he had seen at Yverdun', resolved to substitute the teaching of the mother tongue for that of mathematics, and to mould it into a progressive system of gymnastics for the mind.[1] He was next led to use the teaching of the mother tongue as a means not only of intellectual, but also of moral culture, and this became with Girard its central object. The majority of the examples which he used in the teaching of grammar had some moral bearing, and he constantly asked his pupils to discuss the moral problems thus raised in the course of his teaching. The *Cours éducatif de la langue maternelle pour les écoles et les familles* (3 parts, 6 vols., 1845–7), which contains a systematic course of practical lessons, presents in reality a catechism of morals for children on the lines desired by Kant.[2] Girard's motto is—

> Les mots pour les pensées;
> Les pensées pour le cœur et la vie.

The chief objects of instruction he enumerates as follows:—'*l'homme, la famille, la patrie, le genre humain,*

[1] Girard (*De l'enseignement régulier*, p. 92) refers to a German author, Krause, as having anticipated him in the use of the mother tongue as an intellectual gymnastic training, but says that Krause used it unsystematically. The reference is, perhaps, to the philosopher, Karl Christian Friedrich Krause. The point requires investigation.

[2] Kant's *Pädagogik*, ed. Willmann, p. 105.

la nature, son Auteur, la Providence, J.-C. Sauveur des hommes, la vie au delà du tombeau, et la morale de l'enfance.' He protests constantly against the *passive rôle* played by children in the teaching of his time,[1] and in the exercises on composition, he was the first, so far as I am aware, to make systematic use in the teaching of the mother tongue of the precept of the mediaeval rhetoricians[2]:—

Quis? quid? ubi? quibus auxiliis? cur? quomodo? quando?

In the plans of familiar letters, stories, dialogues, descriptions, and essays, contained in the *Cours Éducatif, Troisième Partie, t. ii., Exercices de style et de composition*, Girard constantly interjects the questions *lequel? quoi? comment? pourquoi? quand? à quelle fin?* &c. He points out that the compositions of young children are, as a rule, either painfully dull and sterile, or else verbose, wandering, and inconsistent, whereas plans of the kind that he uses at once stimulate and regulate the thought of the pupils. 'Moreover, and this is essential, by this work they are led unconsciously to help in their own education.' In his own school, the written composition was in each case preceded by oral preparation in class, during which, however, the pupils themselves played the chief part, and the teacher acted as judge, or gave such additional information as seemed necessary.

The account previously given of modern French teaching, and a glance at French text-books on composition, will show how powerfully Girard has influenced the teaching in the lower classes of modern French schools, although his systematic teaching of morals is not carried out on his own plan. Girard's first book was awarded a Montyon prize, and Girard himself, who was a scholar as

[1] See *De l'enseignement régulier*, &c., nouvelle édition, p. 58.
[2] Ernst Laas, in *Der deutsche Aufsatz*, discusses this question learnedly and at length, p. 140 and *passim*.

well as a practical teacher, was elected a corresponding member of the French Institute (Académie des Sciences morales et politiques).

II

M. Jules Payot, a French inspector of schools, well known by his *Éducation de la Volonté* and other works, published an interesting and valuable series of articles on French composition in the *Revue Universitaire* for 1897, 1898, and 1899,[1] inspired by ideas in many ways identical with those of Grégoire Girard, and leading to identical conclusions. '*Cet enseignement* [*de la composition française*]', he says, '*doit devenir l'enseignement moral et social par excellence*[2] . . . *Aussi voudrions-nous qu'avant tout, le choix des sujets constituât une perpétuelle et vivante leçon d'énergie morale.*' He insists constantly on the necessity of using 'active' as opposed to 'passive' methods.

M. Payot lays stress on an important doctrine, which is perhaps to be found implied in Girard's works, but which was in any case preached later explicitly by Bréal in France and Thring in England, viz. that composition should in the first instance be used as a means of training the pupils in the observation of external nature (see p. 24, note 4, and p. 88, above). With the principle of M. Payot, that the criticism of individual compositions in class should be conducted so as to interest the class as a whole, I am in complete agreement, as will be seen from the text, but the method for attaining this result that I have used differs from his in important points. M. Payot's papers are full of interest to the teacher.

[1] See the numbers for June and July, 1897; Jan., Feb., April, and June, 1898; and April, 1899.

[2] *Rev. Univ.* for April, 1898, pp. 345 et seq.

NOTE G

THE TEACHING OF THE MOTHER TONGUE, (I) IN THE UNITED STATES, (II) IN GERMANY

I

The systematic teaching of English in the United States (beyond the limits of 'reading' and 'writing') appears to have been first carried on in the Nonconformist schools called 'academies'. The first of these, the Philadelphia Academy (which developed into the University of Pennsylvania), was established in 1753 by the efforts of Benjamin Franklin.[1] The academies influenced the other schools, and in 1826 a law was passed in Massachusetts providing that every town with 4,000 inhabitants should provide a master capable of giving instruction in Latin and Greek, History, Rhetoric, and Logic.[2]

As to the nature of this teaching authorities differ. While Professor R. G. Boone[3], speaking of the academies (seminaries) in Indiana about 1850, says: 'Rhetoric, composition, debates . . . were after all regarded as the common and efficient means at hand toward a practical preparation

[1] See the 'Essay on Secondary Education', by Prof. E. E. Brown, of the University of California, in the *Monographs on Education*, edited by President Murray Butler, prepared for the Paris Exhibition, 1900. Franklin, in his *Autobiography*, has left a valuable account of the systematic training which he gave himself in the art of writing. Further important statements of his views are given in his 'Sketch of an English School' and in his 'Observations relative to the Intentions of the original Founders of the Academy in Philadelphia, June, 1789', in which he gives full references to Locke and Rollin. These documents are printed in Prof. F. N. Thorpe's *Benjamin Franklin and the University of Pennsylvania*. Bureau of Information, Washington, 1892–3.

[2] The association of rhetoric and logic is a clear sign of the historic descent of the teaching from the mediaeval trivium.

[3] R. G. Boone's *History of Education in Indiana*, Appleton, 1892, as quoted by Carpenter (see note 1, p. 101).

for civic and general duties,' Professor Carpenter, of Columbia University, stigmatizes the course of study as 'meagre', 'formal', 'ill-organized', 'artificial', and 'unintelligent', and goes on to say: 'Up to about 1876, then, there was scarcely to be found, in the United States, any definite, well organized system of secondary instruction in the mother tongue. We were virtually in the same condition that England now is, and at least fifty years behind Germany. . . . It was then that a remarkable movement began, which had the result of making the study of English pre-eminent in the more important colleges and putting it in a distinguished place in the secondary schools.'[1]

Since 1876 a very large number of books and essays on the teaching of English have been published in the United States. Many of these books, like the one quoted, are by well-known scholars, and contain suggestions which the English schoolmaster cannot afford to neglect.[2] But considerable hesitation must be felt with regard to following those suggestions without the most careful investigation. The first question that we may ask is this—Is the result of the teaching of the mother tongue in America good? To this question President G. Stanley Hall of Clark University, one of the leading authorities on education in the United States, replies emphatically in the negative, as follows[3]:—

By general consent, both high school and college youth, in this country [the United States] are in an advanced state of degeneration in the command of this, the world's greatest organ of intellect, and that despite the fact that the study of English often continues from primary into college grades, that no topic counts for more, and that

[1] *The Teaching of English* . . ., by G. R. Carpenter, F. T. Baker, and F. N. Scott (Longmans & Co., 1903), pp. 37–52.

[2] The work of Carpenter, Baker, and Scott contains an extensive bibliography of the subject.

[3] *Adolescence . . . its psychology and its relations to . . . Education*, by G. Stanley Hall, two vols. (London: Sidney Appleton, 1905), vol. ii, pp. 456 et seq.

marked deficiency here often debars from all other courses. Every careful study of the subject for nearly twenty years shows deterioration, and Professor Shurman, of Nebraska, thinks it now worse than at any time for forty years. We are in the case of many Christians described by Dante who strove by prayers to get nearer to God when in fact with every petition they were departing further from Him. Such a comprehensive fact must have many causes. . . .

The succeeding passage is too long to quote *in extenso*, but the causes assigned by Dr. Hall to this remarkable failure in the American teaching of English may be summarized as follows:—

(i) The excessive time given to other languages. 'It is a psychological impossibility to pass through the apprenticeship stage of learning foreign languages at the age when the vernacular is setting without crippling it.' 'The psychology of translation [Professor Hall refers here especially to translation from Latin] shows that it gives the novice a consciousness of etymologies which rather impedes than helps the free movement of the mind.'

[I find it difficult to regard this as a *vera causa*, except in so far as foreign languages tend to crowd out English from the time-tables. But this is not the case in American schools.]

(ii) The subordination of literature and content to language study.[1]

[This cause is equally operative in England.]

(iii) The excessive use of writing in school, as compared with the use of speech.

[But what strikes most Englishmen on coming into contact with Americans is a marked superiority in power of speaking, which contrasts with a relative deficiency in the power of writing.]

(iv) 'The growing preponderance of concrete words for designating things of sense and physical acts over the higher element of language that names and deals with concepts, ideas, and non-material things. The object-lesson came in as a reaction against the danger of merely verbal and definition knowledge and word memory. Now it has gone so far that not only things, but even languages, vernacular and foreign, are taught by appeals to the eye. . . . In modern pedagogy there is

[1] See p. 63, above.

an increased tyranny of things, a growing neglect or exclusion of all that is unseen. The first result of this is, that the modern school child is more and more mentally helpless without objects of sense. . . . Many pupils have never in their lives talked five minutes before others on any subject whatever that can properly be called intellectual. It irks them to occupy themselves with purely mental processes, so enslaved are they to what is near and personal, and thus they are impoverished in the best elements of language.'

[This criticism is difficult to understand without a closer knowledge of American practice than can be obtained from books. It certainly does not apply to the pupils in the highest forms of an English, a French, or a German school. In the highest forms of an English school the main defect in writing is a tendency to second-hand generalization, combined with an inability to present personal experience in clear and logical form. The state of things described by Professor Hall as existing in America, and the state of things existing in England, seem to lie at opposite extremes.]

I trust that it will not seem ungracious to concur in Professor Hall's general criticism. But we in England, in making new experiments, are in duty bound to watch with especially critical eyes the experiments of another people using the same language. Now it is obvious that, while we recognize a marked superiority in the prose of the average French writer over that of the average English writer, we can recognize no such superiority on the part of the American writers. Of recent years the American learned book has shown a perilous tendency towards the involved periods and the dryness of statement and method characteristic not of the best, but of the average, German practice, a result, no doubt, of the close intercourse between German and American Universities, to which the latter are greatly indebted in other ways. In the American school-essays sent over to the Paris Exhibition of 1900, and later to Manchester, I found faults of a different kind. I was struck by the excellence of the ideals as set forth in the plans of the teachers, and the painful inability to realize

them shown in the work of their pupils. Many of the model exercises showed the most marked tendency to 'high falutin' and excessive verbiage and inconsequence. Possibly the dryness of the academic writing is due to a reaction from the exuberance of such school performances.

It is clear evidence of the inefficiency of school teaching that students in the Faculties of Science and Commerce, as well as those in the Faculty of Arts of many American Universities, are required to attend classes in English composition.

This, no doubt, is a better state of things than exists at present in England, where the inefficiency of school teaching is glossed over; but it should make us pause before we take our models from American school methods. The school years should certainly suffice in both countries for the teaching of composition.

As soon as we pass from the region of spelling, punctuation, and grammar to that of thought training, we see that the problem of teaching the mother tongue in England is a very different one from the problem in the United States, where the whole social and political atmosphere is different. Where our great need is to encourage individuality, and freedom in thinking and action, and to get rid of the fetters of traditional methods of teaching, it may be that the children in the United States need fresh discipline and restraint.[1]

The distinction will be clearly felt by the teacher in setting subjects for original exercises and in the mode of their treatment.

[1] In the opinion of President Hall this restraint is already overdone in some respects. During a recent visit to England, Dr. Hall informed me, in conversation, that most American children, as a result of their training, rush into an excess of slang after leaving school. Possibly the restraint may be chiefly exercised in the 'paragraph-writing' which forms so marked a feature in American practice (or at any rate in American textbooks). It seems to me that as soon as a child can construct a paragraph he should at once pass to the treatment of a

II

The teaching of the mother tongue in German secondary schools dates from 1788. Of the teaching at the present day the best available account in English known to the writer is that given by Mr. F. H. Dale.[1] In view of the opinion quoted above, that we in England are 'at least fifty years behind Germany' in the teaching of the mother tongue in secondary schools, we may inquire, without criticizing too closely this arithmetical estimate, in what respects the superiority of Germany over England lies in this matter. We must frankly admit that the German boy, like the American or the French boy, has an immense superiority over the English boy in the power of reproducing or summarizing orally what he has learnt, and that he is not abashed by questioning. Again, he has a knowledge of the classical poetry and prose of his country much greater and more detailed than that of the English boy. In the teaching of oral composition and of literature we have something to learn from Germany.

But the writing of the mother tongue is a different affair. To the writing of German, the schools devote immense pains; the German boy writes many essays, and he is given special exercises in the art of arrangement—'Dispositionsübungen'. Yet the result is what we know, and what is frankly recognized by the most distinguished German critics.

subject as a whole. Paragraphs should be subordinated to general treatment and not regarded as independent units. Obviously this view would not preclude the teacher from asking his pupils to rewrite a faulty paragraph occurring in a complete composition.

I ought to say that so excellent an authority as M. Payot praises 'paragraph-writing' (*Revue Universitaire* for Jan., 1898, p. 20). I am sorry to differ from him on this point.

[1] 'The Teaching of the Mother Tongue in Germany', published in the *Special Reports on Educational Subjects* of the Board of Education, vol. i, 1896–7. I am indebted to Mr. Dale's article for the date quoted above.

'The gift of verbal expression', writes Professor Paulsen, 'and the power of comprehending thoughts and investigating them often remain extraordinarily undeveloped and are not seldom put to shame by the development of these powers in persons who have had neither secondary nor academic training.'[1] 'In no branch of our [school] activity', says one of the most recent authorities on this subject, 'is the disproportion between the effort spent and the result achieved so striking as in the German essay.'[2] And there have been many recent denunciations of the inflated and artificial 'paper-style' produced by the German school composition.[3]

This does not, however, mean that we may calmly neglect to watch what is being done in Germany in this matter. A Prussian ministerial circular[4] states that, 'next to the instruction in religion, that in German is the most valuable as a training both in character and the intellect.' Paulsen puts forward an eloquent plea for the replacement of Latin by German as the basis of all humanistic teaching in the secondary school of the future.[5]

It will doubtless be no easy thing to overcome a secular tolerance of ponderous and involved sentences, and of a plan ill matched to the subject in hand. But the country of Kant, of Herbart, of Froebel, and of Rein may very well before long find some effective means of dealing with what is probably the weakest feature in its educational system, and, in view of our own defects, German efforts towards reform in this matter deserve our serious attention.

[1] *Geschichte des gelehrten Unterrichts*, 2nd edition, 1897, vol. ii, 649.
[2] Professor Hermann Schott, *Zur Praxis des deutschen Aufsatzes, besonders in den oberen Klassen. Neue Jahrbücher für das klassische Altertum . . . und für Pädagogik*: Jahrgang 1905, 2te Abteilung, p. 329.
[3] I am indebted to my friend, Professor J. G. Robertson, for drawing my attention to Otto Schroeder's interesting essay, *Vom papiernen Stil*, Leipzig, 5th edition, 1902.
[4] Quoted by Dale, loc. cit., p. 536.
[5] Loc. cit., vol. ii, pp. 662 et seq.

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I. EXERCISES FOR YOUNGER CHILDREN

(CHIEFLY FROM THE FRENCH)

[NOTE.—In most cases the object of the stories given in this section will be obvious from the plan. The stories should be told, as a rule, as if to another child; in some instances they may be told as if to a parent or some other older person.]

1.—THE BOY WHO WANTED HIS BROTHER TO BE TAUGHT GENEROSITY[1]

1. Henry (aged five) and his brother Frank (aged four) have each been given a cake. Henry finishes his in three mouthfuls. 2. He asks his mother to tell Frank to share his cake with him so that Frank may learn to be generous. 3. His mother refuses. (What does she say?) [With older

[1] Adapted from MM. Morlet and Dupuis's *Style et Rédaction Cours moyen—Livre du Maître* (Delagrave).

pupils section 3 may be replaced by the instruction, 'Finish the Story.']

Development

1. Henry and Frank were two small brothers, Henry was five years old and Frank was four. Their mother had given each of them a delicious cake covered with sifted sugar. Frank ate his slowly like a well-behaved little boy; but Henry, who was greedy, finished his in three mouthfuls. Then he looked enviously at Frank's cake which was scarcely begun.

2. All at once he remembered that his mother always liked them to share things, so that they might grow used to being generous. 'Mother,' he said, 'tell Frank to give me half his cake, so that he may learn to be generous.'

3. His mother smiled, but she answered, 'No, my boy, perhaps it might teach Frank to be generous, but it would certainly teach Henry to be still greedier than he is.'

2.—THE BOTTLE OF SYRUP[1]

1. Tom has seen a bottle in his mother's bedroom; he thinks the bottle is full of sweet syrup. 2. While his mother is out, he goes into the bedroom, climbs on to a chair, and takes down the bottle. 3. He tastes the contents. The bottle has medicine in it. 4. Tom is ill for several days.

Development

1. Tom was a very greedy boy. He had seen in his mother's bedroom, high up on a shelf, a large black bottle, and he said to himself that the bottle must certainly have something very good in it, perhaps raspberry syrup.

2. One day when his mother was out Tom went into the bedroom, climbed on to a chair, and took down the bottle. If he could have read what was on the label he would have seen that it was not raspberry syrup, but he did not know how to read, for Tom was not only greedy, he was also very lazy.

3. He got down from the chair, took the cork out of the

[1] Adapted from MM. Morlet and Dupuis's *Style et Rédaction : Cours moyen—Livre du Maître* (Delagrave).

bottle, and, without troubling to fetch a glass or a spoon, raised the neck of the bottle to his lips and swallowed a large mouthful of the liquid. 'Oh!' he cried, 'what horrid stuff! I wonder what it is!'

4. As a matter of fact it was some medicine which Tom's mother had put on the shelf so that the boy should not touch it. But if medicine is taken when it is not needed, it may do harm instead of good. Tom was very ill and had to be kept in bed for nearly a week.

3.—THE FIB[1]

1. John (twelve years old) is never so happy as when he makes his sister Mary (five years old) believe some piece of nonsense. 2. John, who has received a five-shilling piece, makes his sister believe that silver grows like plants. (Make the brother and sister speak.) 3. In the evening John wants to look at his money again. Mary has planted it. 4. They look for the five-shilling piece in the garden, but Mary cannot remember where she planted it, and they cannot find it. John is both angry and sorry, and tells his mother. His mother draws a moral from his conduct.

Development

1. John's greatest pleasure is to make fun of people by telling them fibs. This silly boy, who is twelve years old, was very pleased when he had made his five-year-old sister Mary believe some piece of nonsense.

2. His godfather had given him a five-shilling piece. He was very proud of it, and showed it to Mary, who opened her eyes wide. 'Silver,' said the little girl, 'how pretty it is! John, where is silver found?' 'What! don't you know that silver grows like cherries?' 'Really! Is that true?' 'Of course. You plant a coin and a bush grows out of it; in the summer it has silver coins on it, some big and some small. It is a very pretty bush.' 'Is it quite, quite true?' 'Of course, if *I* tell you so.' And John, putting the coin in his drawer, set off for school, thinking to himself, 'how silly little girls are!'

[1] Adapted from MM. Carré and Moy's *Première Année de Rédaction . . .—Livre du Maître* (A. Colin).

3. In the evening John wanted to look at his coin again, but could not find it. 'Mary, have you taken my five shillings?' 'Yes, I have got a surprise for you; I have planted it in the garden; you wait till the summer comes!'

4. 'You silly child,' said John, crossly. Mary was surprised. 'Where did you plant it?' he asked. But Mary could not remember exactly where. John was very angry and called his mother, and told her what had happened. They looked all over the garden and dug up the soil in likely places, but they could find nothing. John was ashamed of himself. 'You have only got the punishment you deserve,' said his mother; 'if this teaches you not to tell falsehoods, the lesson will be worth the five shillings you have lost.'

4.—No one will know[1]

1. Peter is tempted by a branch with three fine pears which he sees hanging over a wall within his reach; he looks round to see if he is watched. 2. Peter catches hold of the branch. Two pears fall on the other side of the wall; he seizes the third. 3. He eats it hastily and by stealth. 4. He is uneasy; he thinks that perhaps he has been seen. 5. He has been seen by his own conscience.

5.—A Straightforward Boy[1]

1. It is class time; Charles is searching his pocket for his pencil. (What things does he pull out of his pocket?) 2. His neighbour George pushes his elbow and makes Charles drop his marbles. (Describe the effect produced on the class by the marbles rolling on the floor.) The master is about to punish Charles. 3. Charles says nothing (why?); but George confesses. 4. The master punishes neither Charles nor George (why? Make the master speak).

6.—Greedy Jane[1]

1. Jane (aged ten) going into the kitchen, sees a wicker basket on a shelf. She concludes that it is a basket of plums (make her speak). 2. Her temptation (make her

[1] Adapted from MM. Carré and Moy's *Première Année de Rédaction . . .—Livre du Maître* (A. Colin).

speak). She yields to temptation. 3. She climbs into a chair, puts her hand into the basket, and is pinched by a crayfish; Jane's terror; the basket falls. 4. The crayfish are scattered over the kitchen floor; Jane is afraid of them. 5. She cries out; her parents hurry in. 6. Moral.

7.—The Generous Cat

1. An old bachelor is very fond of his cat Eppie. Eppie has a special chair, and eats her meals at table from a plate. 2. One day she brings two dead mice into the dining-room, and puts one on her master's plate and one on her own.

8.—The Spider and the Chickens[1]

1. Three little chickens searching for something dainty to eat, see a large spider hanging at the end of its thread, just out of reach. 2. It could be reached by any one of the chickens standing on a big stone that is near, but, instead of helping one another to get it, they fight for possession of the stone. 3. In the meantime the spider spins its way up the thread and leaves the chickens disappointed.

9.—The Little Boy and the Grasshopper: A Dream[1]

1. A little boy finds a grasshopper and cruelly amuses himself by making it jump and jump, and tormenting it. 2. But all at once the grasshopper begins to grow very fast until it becomes an enormous creature, many times bigger than the little boy. In turn it makes the little boy jump and jump, until his strength fails him—and he awakes trembling with fear.

[Tell this story as if to some one younger than yourself.]

Development

1. 'Come, Mrs. Grasshopper, jump!' said a little boy to a grasshopper on a blade of grass. 'Why don't you jump? It is your business to jump. Jump! Jump quickly!'

[1] Adapted from MM. Morlet and Dupuis's *Style et Rédaction: Cours moyen—Livre du Maître* (Delagrave).

'I am tired, Jack,' said the grasshopper. 'I have done nothing but jump all day; it is late and time to sleep; I should be glad to rest a little.'

'You to rest! Lazy creature! Jump when I tell you to. I know how to make you jump.'

2. And the little boy, who was cruel and used to tormenting animals, struck the grasshopper with the twig he held in his hand. But what happened? The grasshopper suddenly began to grow; she grew and grew until she was a hundred times, a thousand times, larger than the little boy. With the end of her claw, which lengthened and lengthened, she threw little Jack into the air.

'Come, my little man,' she said, 'why don't you jump? Jump, lazy child, when I tell you to! I know how to make you jump.'

And there was the small boy jumping in his turn, jumping and jumping until—he waked trembling with fear and anger.

It was a dream.

10.—Edward and his Dog[1]

1. Edward holds out a piece of bread to his dog; as the dog jumps forward to take it, Edward gives him a blow with his stick. 2. At this moment Edward's uncle arrives, holding in his hand a present for his nephew.

[Finish the story as you please. What does the uncle do and say?]

11.—Henry's Exchange[2]

1. Henry asks his mother to admire a beautiful penknife which a schoolfellow much younger than himself has given him in change for some cheap marbles; the displeasure of Henry's mother. (Make Henry and his mother speak.) 2. Henry gives back the knife. 3. Moral.

[1] Adapted from MM. Morlet and Dupuis's *Style et Rédaction: Cours moyen—Livre du Maître* (Delagrave).

[2] Adapted from MM. Carré and Moy's *Première Année de Rédaction . . .—Livre du Maître* (A. Colin).

12.—The Scarecrow

A farmer put a scarecrow in his cherry-tree to keep away the birds. Unknown to him, a pair of robins built a nest in the pocket of the scarecrow, and fed their family on the ripe fruit until the young ones could fly.

13.—A Wise Old Horse

A horse had been shod, but the new shoe pinched him. His master, going into the grazing-field next day, found the gate down and the horse gone; on the top of the gate were the marks of a horse's teeth, as though the horse had lifted the gate off. The master could not find the horse and could hear nothing of it. At last he arrived at the shop of the blacksmith who had shod the animal. The blacksmith related how the horse had come to him that morning and had lifted up his ill-shod foot as if asking for a new shoe; he had re-shod the horse, which had then gone away. When the master returned home, he found the horse grazing in its field.

[Told by Emily Carter in *The Nursery*. The anecdote is from a true story related by Rev. Thomas Jackson, of a horse belonging to a Mr. J. Lane, of Frescombe, Gloucestershire.]

14.—Absence of Mind[1]

1. A man was riding home on a donkey. It was a hot day, and he rode alongside the wall of an orchard overhung by the branches of the trees inside. (Why did he ride alongside the wall?)

2. He looked up and saw that there were some ripe plums above him. (Make him describe the plums.)

3. He rose in his stirrups to pluck them. They seemed to be just out of reach. (Describe his efforts to get them.)

4. It occurred to him that some one behind might at this moment call out 'Gee-up, Neddy.' Unfortunately he thought aloud. (Make him speak.)

5. The obedient donkey moved on and the poor man fell.

[1] Adapted from MM. Carré and Moy's *Première Année de Rédaction—Livre du Maître* (A. Colin).

15.—Santa Claus's Present

A labourer and his wife were sad because they were too poor to give their little girl a Christmas present, but the little girl declared that Santa Claus must surely leave some gift for her. Early on Christmas morning she rushed into her parents' room, crying out: 'Santa Claus has been here!' A shivering sparrow had flown in at the window and crept into her shoe.

[From verses by Celia Thaxter, published by Houghton, Mifflin and Co.]

16.—A Lazy Boy[1]

[Manchester High School for Girls.]

James Dawson's father was a farm labourer on the farm of a Mr. Woods. He was a very hard-working man, but, alas, his son did not take after him; for James was lazy and very fond of play, and he used to love to lie in bed in the mornings. His mother used to call him at seven in the mornings, for she knew he would not get up till nearly eight. James made many resolutions to get up early, but they all faded away when it was time to get up. One morning his mother called him later than usual,—at half-past seven—for he had three miles to go to school. He grunted, and went to sleep again. He awoke at eight o'clock, dressed in a hurry, and raced downstairs. He grabbed his reading-book and a piece of bread and cheese, and ran to school. He ought to have started at ten minutes past eight, but it was now twenty past. It was September; there had been a lot of fruit that season and now it lay on the ground. James climbed into farmer Woods's orchard and took some pears—for he was not in such a hurry that he could not do that. There had been very heavy rains, and James got his boots wet in the long grass.

He then climbed over the hedge again and ran across the road.

[1] For plan see p. 49, above.

But he dropped his reading-book on the way in the mud, and before he could rescue it, a cart which was passing ran over and spoiled it. 'What will the master say?' he thought. He knew he was sure to get another whipping, and he had had two already. He ran to school and arrived ten minutes late. The master did not notice this, however, for he was busy hearing some children saying their spelling. James asked another boy to let him share his reading-book, and the boy consented, for James gave him one of his pears. The master soon noticed, however, and asked James where his reading-book was; and he was forced to tell. The master then said that Mr. Dawson would have to buy him a new one.

James knew his father would have to do without something that he wanted to buy him another, and he was very sorry.

He went to the farmer—Mr. Woods—and asked if he might help to store the apples and pears. The farmer consented, and said he would pay James two shillings for the work.

James had now to get up two hours earlier every morning for a week. He was thus able to pay for the book, and he had a little money over besides. This he spent on a new tie, for he had lost his own and had not been able to wear any at all. With getting up early in the mornings to gather the pears, he now was able to get up when he was called.

17.—A Christmas Present

[Owens College Practising School.]

The story summarized was as follows:—

A girl *A.* is given half a crown by her uncle in order to buy a Christmas present. She has decided to buy a doll that she sees in a shop window, and turning round she finds standing near her a poor schoolfellow to whom she tells her plan. The schoolfellow answers that the doll is 'nice', but she herself would prefer a warm cape from the next shop. *A.*, instead of buying the doll for herself, buys the cape for her schoolfellow.

ETHEL'S KIND ACT[1]

It was Christmas time, and the snow had been falling heavily for some days. The streets would have been bleak and desolate but for the brightly-lighted shops and the merry people passing to and fro. 'How I wish I had some nice things like those,' said a little girl to herself as she passed a shop full of warm coats and capes. Little Nellie did not know what it was to be really warm and happy, and Christmas was no pleasant time for her. Why should it be? 'Do you know,' said a voice by her side, 'I think it would be much jollier to have that beautiful doll.' Turning, Nellie saw a little girl about her own age standing by her side. 'No,' Nellie answered, looking at the doll, which was marked *2s. 6d.*, 'I would rather have that cape,' nodding towards one that was also marked *2s. 6d.* 'I shall have no presents this Christmas, but, of course, you don't need that cape like I do,' she added with a sigh, as she glanced at the warm furs which the little girl was wearing. 'Uncle Jack has given me half a crown,' the little stranger continued, 'and I am going to buy that doll; isn't she a beauty!' Nellie did not answer, but gazed into the cape window instead. Ethel was turning to go into the other shop, but something in the little girl's face stopped her. Then she thought a minute, but only for a minute. 'Should you like that cape *very* much?' she said gently. 'Shouldn't I, just?' Nellie answered. 'But, of course, it's no good wishing. I must be going, Miss,' she continued, 'father will be wanting his tea,' and she was turning to go when Ethel caught hold of her arm. 'Wait a minute,' she said; then she ran into the shop where the capes were sold. Before long she was out in the street again, with a bundle in her arms. 'There you are,' she said, thrusting it into Nellie's arms, 'I won't be selfish, and you need the cape more than I,' and before Nellie could answer her, she was gone. 'Well I never,' said the doll, looking at the tin-soldiers, 'I do think that was kind, I am glad I was not bought after all, though I did want to be at first; I shall never forget that as long as I live.' You may be sure that

[1] The exercise took seventy minutes to work out in the rough form and forty-five to copy out.

Nellie never forgot this kind act, and I think Ethel must have felt very happy, for she learnt that real happiness comes with thinking of others and not by selfishness.

[The Class considered this story the best of the series. It was pointed out that the two children in the story are not schoolfellows as they are in the plan; that there is some confusion in the use of the words 'little girl' and 'little stranger': and that it is rather hard for the reader to keep Ethel and Nellie distinct in his mind. One portion of the lesson may be quoted *in extenso*.

Teacher: There is one sentence on which I should like comments. Nellie says, 'of course you don't need that cape like I do.'

(*Nearly every hand is held up.*)

Chorus: It ought to be '*as* I do', not 'like I do'.

(*Two hands remain outstretched.*)

Teacher: Well?

M. and *G.*: Oh, but Nellie was a poor girl, and I dare say she wouldn't have gone to a good school, and she *would* have said '*like* I do'.]

18.—JOHN'S BRAVE DEED

[Owens College Practising School.—An 'original story', with comments.]

One day a poor little boy was walking down a side street in London. At the bottom of the street there was a deep but small stream. The boy's name was John. He had no mother or father. He was nearly without clothes, he had only a few rags on his legs and his back, and it was eleven o'clock, and he hadn't had any breakfast. As he was walking along, singing to himself, he heard horses coming along at a terrific rate. John walked along not taking any notice, but he heard them coming nearer so he turned round and walked in the direction where the noise was coming from. John had not to wait long, he had gone about five paces when two horses and a carriage came in sight. John saw at a moment the danger, the two horses were running away. There was nobody on the box, the coachman had evidently

been thrown off. John knew that if they went three hundred yards further, they would go into the river and get drowned. In the carriage there were two ladies and a gentleman and they would get drowned too. As he was thinking that they would get drowned the carriage was about fifty yards in front, so John ran to get up to the carriage. When he was about ten yards off the carriage he gave a sudden leap and caught hold of the reins which were nearly on the ground; then he gave a sudden jerk which stopped the horses for a few moments, then he shouted to the people in the carriage to get out; barely were they out when the horse nearest John kicked him over and dashed down the street, and they were out of sight in a few minutes and were never seen again. When John came to his senses he was lying on a feather bed with his leg broken and a nurse bending over him. When he looked around he saw several other beds with several poor girls and boys in an unhappy condition like himself. When his leg was better he went away. One day he met one of the ladies and she was very beautiful. When she saw him she thanked him very much and gave him a diamond ring to remember that he had saved three lives. Several years after John and the young lady got married, and everybody who comes to the house where they live always hears of John's Brave Deed.

H. S., aet. 11.

[The Teacher had much difficulty in keeping the Class silent during the reading of this somewhat remarkable narrative. 'Are there deep streams in London streets?' asked M. in an audible whisper. When 'John' suddenly leapt ten yards to catch the reins, the Class laughed aloud; and they laughed again at the fairy-tale ending. But the Teacher took the part of H. S., while not defending him in these particulars. The earlier compositions of H. S. were so exceedingly meagre, consisting as a rule of not more than four or five lines, that he had been led to regard him as a hopeless case. In spite of its occasional inconsistencies H. S. proves that he has imagination, and is as capable as his comrades of writing a story with a thread in it, and with some vividness in the realization of detail. The Teacher was convinced that by direct personal effort he

could have done nothing with H. S. It was from the Class, not the Teacher, that H. S. had learnt. These reflections were naturally not communicated to the Class.

It was before noted that this was one of the occasions which most deeply impressed on the Teacher the necessity for guiding the Class in the path of kindness while giving it every liberty in criticism. (See p. 55 above.)]

19.—NELLIE'S LESSON

[Owens College Practising School.—An 'original story', with comments.]

Nellie Parker lived in a pretty little village with her father, mother, and little brother. Every day she attended the village school, which was about half a mile distant. At the time of which we are speaking, however, it was holiday time, for it was summer. Nellie had been allowed to do pretty much as she liked, and consequently was rather lazy. One night she went to bed planning in what manner she should spend the following day. The weather turned out all that could be desired. The beautiful sun rose in all its glory, and not a cloud could be seen, as far as the eye could reach. 'I will go down by the river with a book, and find a shady place, instead of minding baby,' she thought, 'he is such a little bother, and mother is sure to want me to look after him, but I intend to do as I like to-day.' She then turned to look at the clock, and saw that it was already nine. 'Well, I'm not going to get up yet, anyhow,' she said to herself, 'I'll wait till Jane has finished dusting downstairs, and then I need not do any.' So saying, she turned round and went to sleep again. 'Nellie! Nellie!' called her mother, 'be quick down, dear, I want you.' 'Very well, mother,' she answered, 'I will be down soon.' Her tone, however, did not sound as though she intended to be down quickly, and very soon Nellie was fast asleep again. When she awoke, the bright sunbeams were playing round her bed, and the little birds outside seemed to be saying, 'Be quick, Nellie, and get up, what a pity to stay in bed this fine morning!' but Nellie did not hear them. 'Why,' she exclaimed, 'It can't be ten yet!' But the clock stood there, ticking, as loudly as ever, as much as to say, 'It is, though.'

'You nasty thing,' thought Nellie, 'I wonder why people can't stay in bed as long as they like. I'm sure everybody would be pleased if they could, I know *I* should.' When she at length walked leisurely downstairs, everybody seemed to be busy, or doing something useful, except herself. 'This is a dreadful time to be coming down, Nellie,' said her mother. 'You must be quick and make up for lost time.' 'Must I, indeed?' thought Nellie, though aloud she said, 'What am I to do, mother?' 'After breakfast I want you to take baby out, and go to see granny, she is always so upset if a day passes without her seeing any of us.' 'O, mother!' exclaimed Nellie, 'It is such a long way, and besides——' 'You heard what I said, Nellie,' answered her mother; and Nellie knew that she must not disobey. 'It is a great shame,' muttered she to herself, as she went out, banging the door behind her. In the sitting-room baby was trying his best to get one of his fists into his mouth, but when he saw Nellie he laughed and clapped his hands with delight. Ever since baby was born he had been Nellie's special care, and she thought that he was indeed the best, the most wonderful baby in the world, while baby was never really happy or contented unless Nellie was near. This morning, however, she was cross. 'It is all your fault, baby,' she exclaimed, 'If it hadn't been for you, I should have been enjoying myself now, I did want to read that book Uncle Jack gave me,' and she flushed angrily, while baby looked at her in wondering surprise. At last they started. 'I'm not going to hurry,' said Nellie to herself, 'It is much too hot to walk quickly.' Turning round the corner she came face to face with Mabel Stuart, a school friend. 'Hullo, Nellie, where are you going to?' she asked. Nellie told her. 'What a shame to send you such a long way!' Mabel exclaimed, 'but, as I have nothing to do in particular, I will go with you.' 'Let us sit down here and rest a bit,' answered Nellie, 'I am awfully tired.' So they sat down on a grassy bank, near the river. Time passed on unnoticed by the two children (it was already early in the afternoon) who were so engrossed in each other that time, granny, and baby were all forgotten. Once only did Mabel suggest going, but Nellie had answered, 'Oh, no, don't let us go yet, there is no need to hurry,' so they stayed. They were at length roused by a loud splash, and, looking

round, Nellie saw that her little brother had disappeared. 'Oh, Mabel, he is in the water, go for help, quick! quick!' she screamed, and while Mabel darted off in the direction of a farmhouse near by, Nellie rushed to the edge of the water, and sprang in to where she saw the baby's head appearing above the water. She clutched him wildly, and was about to return, but the weight of the half-drowned baby, and the fast-flowing river, were too much, and she would have sunk exhausted in the water, had not help arrived at that moment. The baby had been moving restlessly about in his carriage, which, by degrees, had gradually been getting nearer and nearer to the water. When it slipped over the edge of the river, baby had been thrown out, with the result just related. The farmer, whom Mabel had been to bring, thought, as he lifted the unconscious children into the boat, that he had indeed arrived too late, and that Nellie's father and mother would be left childless. More help had now arrived, so the farmer and the three children were quickly driven to Nellie's home. Once there, every care was taken to bring the children to life again. Nellie was conscious and saw with great grief what her laziness had led to, and repented having been so naughty, but the baby was not so fortunate. He had been in the water much longer than Nellie, and, as no sign of life appeared in his little body, the agonized parents feared that nothing that earth could do would recall him. For hours Nellie sat outside the door of the bedroom weeping bitterly. Suppose her little brother died, and through her fault, how could she ever face any one again? and she felt, indeed, that she had not loved him half enough. At last, the doctor, whose grave face had so distressed her, opened the door and came out. He smiled as he saw the little figure crouched on the floor, and, laying his hand kindly on her head, said gently, 'It is all right, dear, go in and see him, he has been asking for you.' The relief, however, was too great, and she burst into tears. In a moment she was in the room, with her arms locked round the baby as if nothing should part them. Never again did Nellie neglect her brother, or murmur at her mother's will, for, in after years, when she was tempted to do so, that day by the river seemed to stand out in her mind as a warning. The lesson was never forgotten.

E. C., aet. 13.

[E. C.'s story is perhaps a little over-pathetic. It was avowedly an attempt to meet a criticism made on an earlier effort, namely, that a single lesson must be a very severe one if it is to produce any real change in character. The Class was too much carried away by the emotion of the story to be critical, and the Teacher, recognizing the hard work and concentration of attention which the story had involved, abstained and said nothing. There is, however, a real danger in allowing children to be emotional, a danger both of over-stimulating their feelings and of blunting them; though the danger is less when the child expresses himself or herself naturally. Teachers should, I think, be careful not to set pathetic subjects for class-work.]

II. FABLES

1.—The Fox and the Crow

[Owens College Practising School.]

The Fable, with its obvious moral, and freedom from anything approaching pathetic sentiment, is particularly useful as an exercise.

The fable of the Fox and the Crow was summarized approximately as follows:—'A crow was sitting on a tree with a piece of cheese in its mouth. A fox came past and flattered the crow, telling him what a beautiful voice he had. The crow opened his mouth to sing and dropped the cheese. The fox picked it up and ran off with it.' The Class obviously (and very rightly) asked how the crow came by the cheese, and added such details as seemed fitting to heighten the effect of the story. The moral was not asked for; but, as the Teacher expected, it was given in nearly all cases. Finally, after various criticisms, a translation of La Fontaine's version was read to the class.

The following exercise was probably the best sent in:—

'The Fox and the Crow' or 'Beware of Flatterers'

'Go and get some food for breakfast,' said the mother crow, 'our little ones will be starving.' 'Let them starve,' answered

the father crow, who was very selfish and not in a very good humour that morning, 'what do I care about them?' 'I think you are a very selfish bird,' replied the mother crow, whose name was Tit, 'do go and get some.' At last Tat (for that was the name of the father crow) was persuaded, and he hopped away to try and find some worms.

He had not hopped far when he came to an open window, where some crumbs were just being put out. 'Oh,' thought Tat, 'now I shall have a good feed.' He had eaten [them] nearly all when he remembered his mate and little ones at home; so he picked up a very big piece of cheese (only just in time, for another bird was flying down to claim it), to take home to the little ones. He was flying home, when he let the cheese drop, but he recovered it once more safely. After this, he thought he would hop instead of fly, then he would be sure not to drop the cheese, but, in a minute or two, he espied a fox in the distance and so he flew on to the nearest tree and waited for the fox to pass.[1] But the fox did not, but stood under the very tree where the crow was perched. Tat, when he saw this, flew a bit higher so that the fox might not see what he had got in his mouth, but, unfortunately, the fox did see, and began talking to the crow in a most amiable way, which amused the crow very much. 'Oh,' said the fox, 'how beautiful are thy wings, how bright thine eyes, thy claws—I beg pardon, thy talons—thou art the best of all the birds of the air, but there is just one fault in you, that it is such a pity that you are dumb.'[2] With this, the crow began to 'caw', and immediately the piece of cheese dropped out of his mouth on to the ground, just near the fox. The fox at last got his prize and ran off exclaiming that whatever he had said of his beauty he had said nothing of his brains.[3] When Tat got home and told his wife his adventures, Tit told him that she would have nothing more to do with him, and that he could get out of her sight.

[1] The awkwardness of construction in this sentence, which may be remedied in reading by bringing out the fact that the phrase 'then, he would be sure not to drop the cheese', is written in a kind of indirect narration, was not commented on on this occasion.

[2] The change from 'thou' to 'you' was, of course, noticed.

[3] This addition to the story was much approved.

The crow was never deceived again by a fox or any other animal.

2.—The Treasure

1. A countryman, who had worked hard all his life and had been able to buy a vineyard with his savings, lay on his death-bed. He sent for his sons and told them that a treasure was buried in the vineyard which he would leave to them. 2. After his death, the sons dug the vineyard over and over again, but found no treasure. 3. The profit of the next vintage explained the words of the father.

After Æsop.

3.—The Hare and the Tortoise

1. A hare makes fun of a tortoise (why?). The tortoise says he will run a race with the hare, and the fox shall be umpire. The hare agrees. 2. The two start together, but the hare, outstripping the tortoise, stops by the wayside and takes a nap. 3. The hare awakes and calls out for the tortoise. 4. The tortoise replies that he is already at the winning-post.

After Æsop.

4.—The Oak and the Reed

1. A great oak-tree said one day to a reed that nature had been unkind to her, for the slightest breeze forced her to bend her head, whereas he could resist the greatest storm. 2. The reed replied that she needed no pity; she had less to fear from wind than the oak; for she could bend without breaking. 3. At this moment a violent storm arose. The oak was uprooted; the reed escaped unhurt.

La Fontaine (after Æsop).

[In this fable make the oak and the reed speak.]

5.—The Pail of Milk

1. Lucy, with a pail of milk on her head, was tripping across the fields. 2. As she walked, she made her plans for the future: she would sell her milk at a good price; with

the money she would buy some eggs, set them under her best hens, raise chickens, and by selling these make enough money to buy a pig; the pig, fattened up, would, when sold, bring in enough money to buy a cow and a calf, and the calf would skip about in the field. 3. At the thought, Lucy, forgetting her milk, began to skip too. Down fell the pail, away ran the milk, and with it vanished her dreams. 4. Moral.

La Fontaine.

6.—The Blind Man and the Cripple

1. Once there were two beggars, a blind man and a cripple. The cripple used to lie on wooden planks in the market-place; the blind man had to find his way as best he could, without the help of a friend or even of a dog. No one sympathized with the beggars, and they felt that they would rather die than live.

2. One day the blind man heard the cripple complaining, and his own misfortune made him sympathize with the other's suffering. (Make the two men speak.) The blind man suggested that he, being able to walk, should go where the cripple wished, while the lame man should direct his steps; thus each would feel his own misfortune less.

3. Moral.

Development

1. Once there were two beggars, a blind man and a cripple, both very poor and unable to earn a living. The lame man used to lie unpitied on wooden planks in the market-place, where all passed him by; the blind man, to whom everything threatened danger, had none to help him, none to lean upon, not even a little dog to care for him and to guide him. Their sufferings were all the harder to bear for want of sympathy, and they felt that they would rather die than live.

2. But one day the blind man, groping his way along the turn of a road, chanced upon the cripple; he heard his groans, and he was moved with pity; 'I have my ills,' he said, 'and you have yours; let us unite them, brother, and they will be less hard to bear.'

'Alas!' replied the cripple, 'do you not know that

I cannot move an inch by myself; you cannot see. Of what use should we be to one another?'

'Of what use?' answered the blind man, 'Listen: each of us has what the other lacks; I have legs, you have eyes; I will carry you, you shall guide me; your eyes shall direct my uncertain steps; my legs shall go where you wish; I will walk for you, and you shall see for me.'

3. Mutual aid makes suffering lighter.

After Florian's *L'Aveugle et le Paralytique.*

7.—The Lion and the Mouse

1. King Lion fell asleep beneath an oak (why was he tired? describe the situation), and was awakened by a mouse scrambling over his face. 2. The lion caught hold of the mouse and was about to kill her, when she begged him to set her free and not to kill so small a creature. 3. The lion let the mouse go. 4. Not long afterwards the lion was caught by hunters, and bound with ropes, and, not being able to free himself, set up a loud roar. 5. The mouse heard him, gnawed through the meshes of the net, and set the lion free.

Æsop.

8.—The Girl and the Cat[1]

1. A cat is resting in front of the fire. 2. Jane, at the writing-table, is amusing herself instead of doing her lessons. 3. She gets up and reproaches the cat for not catching mice. 4. The cat answers by asking Jane what example she herself is giving. 5. Jane realizes the truth of the reproach.

Development

1. Sweep, the black cat, was resting near the fire; she was rolled up like a ball and she opened first one eye and then the other to watch the flames. I do not know what she was thinking about, but she looked absolutely happy.

2. Jane, a girl of about twelve years old, was supposed to be working at the writing-table by the window, but she spent half her time looking idly about her, and the other half looking idly at her book.

[1] Adapted from MM. Morlet and Dupuis's *Style et Rédaction: Cours moyen—Livre du Maître* (Delagrave).

3. Suddenly she got up and went over to the fireplace. 'Why, Sweep,' she said, 'you never do anything. The mice have a fine time. Aren't you ashamed of being so lazy?'

4. But Sweep replied: 'Ashamed of being lazy? I kill the mice at night when you are asleep, but you sleep at night and do nothing in the day. Which of us is lazier? Practice before you preach.'

5. Jane, ashamed, went back to work.

9.—The Two Monkeys and the Nut

1. A young monkey gathered a nut, put his teeth to the shell, and threw it away in disgust at its hardness, saying that his mother must have been mistaken in telling him that nuts were good to eat.

2. Another monkey picked up the nut, cracked it with a stone, and ate the kernel, laughing at the first monkey. (Make the monkeys speak.)

3. Moral.

Development

1. A young monkey found on a tree a walnut covered with its green shell. He put his teeth gently to it and made a grimace on finding the shell hard. 'My mother cannot have told the truth when she said that nuts were good to eat. These old people only deceive young folk. No more nuts for me.' So saying, he threw the nut away in disgust.

2. Another monkey, who had been watching, picked up the nut, cracked it quickly between his teeth, took it from the shell, ate it, and said laughingly, 'Your mother was right, friend; nuts are very good to eat, but they must be cracked first.'

3. Moral.

After Florian.

10.—The Rope-Dancer and the Balancing-Stick

1. A clever rope-dancer, with the help of his balancing-stick, gave performances before crowds of people. (Describe his performance on the rope.)

2. One day the dancer, grown proud of his cleverness, said to himself that the balancing-stick was an unnecessary weight, that he would dance better and more gracefully without it.

3. He threw it away, fell, and broke his nose; and the spectators laughed.

4. Moral.

Florian.

III. PLANS OF STORIES FOR OLDER PUPILS

[NOTE.—The Teacher is recommended to allow each pupil to give his own title to his story. The Teacher may either himself define the purpose with which the story has been written, and the audience for whom it is intended, or leave the choice of these points to the writer. The 'purpose' selected may, of course, be merely to amuse; it is not the easiest one to attain.]

1.—A SIMPLE YOUTH

A country boy knocked at the door of a farmer's house about dinner time and asked the farmer for help. He had been, he said, leading his father's hay-cart, and the cart had been upset. The farmer asked him to stay to dinner. The boy declined at first, saying, 'Father wouldn't like it,' but, after some pressing, dined.

The farmer after dinner pointed out how much wiser it was to dine first and pick up the hay afterwards. 'Yes,' replied the boy, 'but father won't like it.' 'Why not?' said the farmer. 'Why, you see, father's under the hay.'

[Relate the story in detail and finish it as you please.[1]]

[1] It was found, in practice, that this story, which was intended to be related in an amusing way, was, by some pupils, turned into a tragedy, ending either by the father's death or the son's whipping. This is only a particular instance of a general case. Our sense of the ludicrous is, as a rule, awakened by a situation which suddenly strikes us as unfitting, and which often implies discomfort or even suffering to some person concerned. A slight change in the situation, or in our realization of it, may increase our sympathies for such a person to a point at which the ludicrous passes into the pathetic or tragic. Hence the teacher may need much tact in dealing with stories of the kind quoted.

2.—A Long Night

A boy, passing the dam of a reservoir in a lonely country towards evening, hears a trickling noise and notices water flowing from a tiny crack. His father has told him that if the water comes through a crack of this kind the crack will widen quickly, that the dam will in a short time be broken through, and that the water from the reservoir will flood the country below and drown hundreds of people. The boy stops the crack with his hand, waiting for a passer-by to take word to the next village. No one passes till the next morning.

[Relate this story as if you were fully acquainted with all the circumstances, and were telling it to the class as an example of heroism in civil life.]

3.—Presence of Mind

There had been a flood in the town of[1] ——. The cellars in the house of ——[1] were half filled with water. Two sisters, aged seven and eight respectively, were passing by the cellar-door when they heard a little noise and looked down. The youngest of the family, a child of three, was on the lowest step of the cellar-stairs, left uncovered by the water. If she went further she would probably be drowned. The girl of seven opened her mouth to scream. Her elder sister stopped her. She made the little one first look up and then come up the stairs.

[Describe the scene; make all the children speak. What effect would the incident be likely to have on the child of seven? Tell the story as if to a younger child.]

4.—A Rescue

'The attention of the Royal Humane Society has just been drawn to a gallant act on the part of a girl named Edith Miles, of Rearsby, Leicestershire. She is only ten years of age, and by ready resourcefulness in a time of panic she saved a boy of five from drowning. Several

[1] Put in any name you choose. The incident actually occurred at Portsea.

children were playing on the banks of the village brook, which was swollen by the heavy rains, and ran at an abnormally swift speed, when one of the number, a little boy aged five, fell into the water, and was carried rapidly down the stream. The children screamed, but there was no grown-up person near to render assistance and it was while the little ones were running frantically about that little Edith Miles went to the rescue. She did not jump into the water, as she recognized even in this moment of excitement that she would be too weak to battle against the stream and effect a rescue. [A.] So she ran as fast as she could along the bank until she came to a plank bridge at a place called Bog Lane, about sixty yards away. Lying down at full length, she put both her arms out and waited patiently for the boy, who had already sunk twice. When the stream had carried him to within an arm's length of the plank the girl caught hold of him firmly by the collar and pulled him out of the water. Then she took him up in her arms and carried him home to his mother. He was soon well enough to run about again.'—*Manchester Guardian*, October 13, 1903.

[The teacher should tell as much of this story as he thinks fit (e. g. stopping at the point marked A) and ask the pupils to finish it.]

5.—A Brave Child

A five-year-old boy at Blackburn woke up and found his bed on fire. The father was at work, and the mother absent from home, nursing a sick sister. He ran downstairs; but hearing his little sister, aged two, cry out, returned and carried her into the court-yard. The house was burnt to the ground. The firemen, when they had done their work, found the children in a corner of the court-yard.

6.—The Dog and the Fire Brigade

A fire brigade received a 'call' for a fire-escape by telephone from a lady in the neighbourhood of ——. When the fire-escape came, the lady admitted that there was no fire, but said that a valuable dog had got on to

the roof, had slipped down on to the gutter, and was in danger of falling. The dog was rescued by the firemen.

[Describe the whole affair.]

7.—Lost Property

Some children, digging out a mouse-hole, find a gold watch. They discuss what they shall do with it.

[Finish the story as you please.]

8.—The Lame Boy[1]

In the American War of Independence, in a town in New Hampshire a final levy was made of all the old men and of the boys over thirteen. All came on parade, including a lame boy. The lame boy was left behind to his great disappointment; although lame, he was strong and active, and in order to occupy himself began to chop wood. Presently a colonel, whose horse had lost his shoe, rode into the town and asked for a blacksmith. The boy forged a horseshoe for the colonel, who was thus enabled to rejoin his troops at a decisive moment and lead them to victory.

9.—Gossip[2]

Farmer George Hilton has been told by his neighbour, Peter Wilson, that John Lewis has stolen a wagon-load of turnips out of his farm-yard and that the thief was seen in the act by several people. On inquiry Farmer George finds the accusation against John Lewis growing less and less. First only a cart-load had been stolen, then only a wheelbarrowful, then a basketful, then a bunch, then merely one turnip, and, finally, the tale resolved itself into a few chance words of John Lewis's which had given rise to the whole scandal.

[Trace the origin of the scandal. Give names to the

[1] Adapted from *Nahum Price*, by E. Everett Hale, quoted in *The Child's World*, by Emilie Poulsson, p. 205. (George Philip & Son.)

[2] Adapted from MM. Morlet and Dupuis's *Style et Rédaction: Cours moyen—Livre du Maître* (Delagrave).

people from whom Farmer George Hilton makes inquiries, and let your characters speak.]

Development

1. One day Peter Wilson said to his neighbour Farmer George Hilton, 'I am sorry to tell you that John Lewis steals your turnips. Several people have told me that they saw him take away a wagon-load the other day.' 'I should never have thought that of John,' said Farmer George, 'but he shall be punished if there is law in this country! Who saw him stealing my turnips?' 'Several people, I tell you; among others Mr. Cox.'

2. Farmer George went to Mr. Cox's house. 'I have been told,' he said to him, 'that you saw John Lewis steal a wagon-load of my turnips. Is it true?'

'A wagon-load! I didn't say a wagon-load; I only said a small cart-load.'

'You saw him steal them?'

'Oh! not exactly; Mrs. White told me about it.'

3. Farmer George went to Mrs. White's.

'That's just like Mr. Cox,' she cried, when Farmer George had asked his question, 'he always exaggerates. I said a wheelbarrowful; that is what Jack Hollins told me.'

'Then you did not see him with your own eyes?'

'No, but as Jack told me . . .'

4. Farmer George went on to Jack Hollins's house.

'Mrs. White declares that you saw John Lewis steal a wheelbarrowful of my turnips?'

'What an exaggeration! I said a basketful. I did not myself see him take them; it was Harry Smith who told me.'

5. Farmer George sought out Harry Smith.

'You said you saw John Lewis steal a basketful of my turnips?'

'No, I said a bunch of turnips. I don't know exactly how many, because I did not see him pull them up; it was Mrs. Bradley who told me about it.'

6. At Mrs. Bradley's, Farmer George asked his question once more. 'A bunch of turnips!' exclaimed Mrs. Bradley; 'I did not say a *bunch*; I said that he pulled up one turnip. Old Simon told me.'

7. Much astonished at the turn the tale had taken, Farmer George went to see old Simon.

'How many turnips did John Lewis steal from my field?' he asked.

'Why, none! He only said "Farmer Hilton's turnips are ready to pull up".'

8. And this is how scandals arise; people exaggerate what they have heard in such a manner as to turn a few simple words into a wagon-load of turnips.

10.—A Temptation

John Jackson was a working man, who, through no fault of his own, but owing to bad trade, had been out of work for some months. He was married and had a family. His savings were gone and he was in arrears with his rent. His landlord threatened to turn him and his family out of the house unless the arrears were paid in full by Michaelmas day. On the day before, in spite of every effort, John was still a pound short of the sum he needed. On his way home by the tram-car, he noticed on the seat, as he entered, a purse left by another passenger. He hesitated for a moment and then put it into his pocket. When he got off the car he looked into the purse, and saw that there was gold in it, more than enough to make up his arrears; and he decided to take it home to his wife.

[You are to narrate this story so as to make the reader realize the circumstances, and you are to finish it as you please.]

11.—The Noblest Action [1]

1. An old man, feeling that he had not much longer to live, divided the greater part of his fortune among his three sons; but he withheld a jewel of great value, to be given at the end of three months to whichever of them had done the noblest action.

2. At the end of the time the three sons came before him. The first had returned a sum of money that had come into his hands without the knowledge of the owner;

[1] Adapted from MM. Morlet and Dupuis's *Style et Rédaction: Cours moyen—Livre du Maître* (Delagrave).

the second had saved the life of a child who was drowning; the third had wakened his enemy, who was sleeping on the edge of a precipice.

[Finish the story.]

12.—The Choice

A little girl, the daughter of a gardener and his wife, loses her mother. The lady in whose service the gardener works takes the child into her house for a time, and offers to adopt her. The girl herself is left to decide whether she will accept the lady's offer.

[You are to describe the circumstances of the case as if you were telling the story to a person of your own age.]

13.—Generosity

A boy is asked for a subscription for some trivial object and refuses. His comrades think him mean. Next day, he alone has money to give to a man in real misfortune.

[Write a story on this subject for boys (or girls) younger than yourself.]

14.—A Surgical Operation

A man of about sixty is run over by a hansom cab. A sympathetic crowd gathers round him. A policeman examines him and finds that his leg is broken. He fetches a saw and a broom-stick and puts the leg in splints. The man gets up and walks off to the astonishment of the crowd. The broken leg was a wooden one.

15.—The Snob

John Enfield and Harry Martin, living in a small country town, were schoolfellows and great friends. John's father was richer than Harry's. Both boys happened to be known for their neatness. One day John found Harry cleaning his own boots, and said that he thought no *gentleman* would do that. Harry replied. [Put in dialogue.] A week later, on the prize day, John came to school with

badly cleaned boots and a smudge on his forehead. His father's servants had been suddenly taken ill and he had had to clean his boots for himself.

[You are to tell this story with the object of showing a boy who thinks manual work ungentlemanly that no kind of work is degrading. You may refer, if you like, to the life of soldiers in the field or to the cleaning of a bicycle or a gun.]

16.—Misjudged Kindness

A maidservant notices a smell of gas, but, as her mistress has been worried by other matters, concludes that it is better not to add to her worries by telling her of the escape of gas. Early next morning (it is winter) a fellow-servant goes, with a lighted taper, into the room in which there is the escape, and a violent explosion takes place.

[Write out the story, giving details, and complete it.]

17.—The Bicycle Pump

James Brown was travelling from Charing Cross to Hythe, taking his bicycle with him. He seated himself in the corner of an empty third-class carriage. At Cannon Street an old lady and her niece entered and took corners on the other side of the carriage. Brown went on reading his newspaper. In the tunnel near Tonbridge station he asked the lady to close the opposite window as the air of the tunnel was foul. The lady looked at him, but did not move. He then rose, thinking that it would be more polite for him to raise the window himself. He was no sooner on his feet than the lady jumped up and rang the alarm bell. She had mistaken the metal bicycle-pump peeping from his breast-pocket for a revolver; and had thought that the demand to pull the window up was a demand to give her money up. Brown laughed and apologized. But the train stopped, and the guard came for explanations from the nervous old lady.

[Tell the story in detail, giving the conversation.]

18.—THE SIGNALMAN

A signalman, on Whit Monday in the year 188–, was ordered to shunt an excursion train in order to allow an express to pass. He did so, but forgot to pull over the points again until he heard the sound of the express approaching. As he went to the lever he saw his little daughter, an only child, on the main line. He hesitated, then pulled over the lever, and fainted. The child was killed by the express. The authorities of the company, on hearing of the affair, promoted him and gave him work of a different character.

[You are first to describe the signalman's cottage and general mode of life, and then the incident itself, in such a way as to make the reader realize the situation, but nevertheless soberly, and without harrowing details.]

IV. SKETCH OF A FIRST LESSON IN LETTER WRITING

Firstly jot down short notes of everything that you wish to say. Then arrange the notes in order, so as to form a *plan*. When it is made, ask yourself if it is the simplest and clearest plan possible. Remember that you are writing not for yourself but for some one who does not know beforehand what you have to say. You want to give him or her a clear impression of what you are describing, not to put down a mere jumble of facts. If you are dissatisfied with your plan, alter it before you begin to write.

Let us take the simplest possible example of a letter written without any kind of plan, from a little girl to her mother (see A, below), and let us rewrite it on a better plan (see B, below).[1]

[1] This general method of dealing with the items in a letter is borrowed from MM. I. Carré and L. Moy's *Première Année de Rédaction —Livre du Maître* (A. Colin).

A.

Bassett's Farm,
Barton Lane,
Dorking,
June 20, 1902.

MY DEAR MOTHER,

(*a*) Lily and I are quite strong again, and we enjoy being here in the country.

(*b*) I hope you are well and father too.

(*c*) The flowers are beautiful in the meadows, and the trees are covered with green leaves.

(*d*) On Tuesday the brown duck laid an egg and Lily had it for breakfast.

(*e*) I wish you could see the wild roses.

(*f*) And in the farm-yard there are seven fluffy yellow ducklings which came out of eggs like the one Lily ate.

(*g*) I have no more time for writing. (*h*) Lily sends her love. (*k*) We are going out for a walk now.

(*l*) I send my love.

Your affectionate daughter,
ANNIE.

B.

Bassett's Farm,
Barton Lane,
Dorking,
June 20, 1902.

MY DEAR MOTHER,

(*b*) I hope you and father are well.

(*a*) Lily and I are quite strong again, and we enjoy being here in the country.

(*c*) The trees are covered with green leaves, and the flowers are beautiful in the meadows. (*e*) I wish you could see the wild roses.

(*d*) On Tuesday the brown duck laid an egg and Lily had it for breakfast.

(*f*) There are seven fluffy yellow ducklings in the farm-yard, which came out of eggs like the one Lily ate.

(*k*) We are going out for a walk now, (*g*) so I have no more time for writing.

(*h* and *l*) With love from us both,

Your affectionate daughter,
ANNIE.

What fault have you to find with it? The letter might begin with the wish that Annie's father and mother are well. Perhaps Annie's mother would like first to know about Annie and her sister; but, never mind, we will begin with sentence (*b*), if you like, and put (*a*) after it.

What about (*c*)? You think that one notices the leaves on the trees before one sees flowers in the meadows. Very well, begin with the trees.

What next? 'Oh, you might take out the wild roses

from between the ducks and the ducklings, and put them near to the trees!' Very well, now sentence (*c*) is finished. What next? Let us put the 'ducks' and 'duckling' sentences together.

What about sentence (*g*)? 'It's all mixed up!' Yes, but how? Why has Annie no time for writing more? 'Oh, because she is going out for a walk.'

What shall we say then?

'We are going out for a walk now, so I have no more time for writing.'

What next? You might say 'we both send love,' instead of saying 'Lily sends her love,' 'I send my love.' Can we put the sentence any other way? '"With love from us both," and then finish with "Your affectionate daughter".'

Very well; then there is your letter rewritten (see B, above).

[The system of indicating the various sentences by means of letters is a mechanical device which may be used occasionally, but which should not be abused.

The Teacher, if he wishes to make his teaching seem real to his pupils, must carefully bear in mind the actual problem involved in writing a familiar letter. The pupil is writing to some one whom he knows. In these circumstances, even if his order is not perfect, 'I forgot to say that, &c.,' is quite pardonable, and sometimes effective.

A few examples only are given below. The Teacher will devise others, and will probably find his class ready to suggest subjects.]

V. MISCELLANEOUS EXERCISES

1. Write a criticism of the following letter from a boy of eleven to a schoolfellow.

MY DEAR WILL,

What a pity that your cold yesterday kept you from wandering through the flowery pastures with us to the pond where the tadpoles and newts are. Half an hour was spent

in arriving at the selected spot, and then we set to work. Some of us had pickle jars, things of admirable utility for holding your catch in, and some of us had, attached to pieces of cord, old sardine tins for dredging. We got good spoil, consisting of many young tadpoles with broad heads and elongated extremities, as well as two newts displaying black spots on the under surface of their variegated bodies. The setting sun illuminated the prospect as we walked home. Next week we are going for another expedition, and I hope you will have recovered from your indisposition so that you will be able to come with us. Adieu.

Yours sincerely,

GEORGE SMITH.

[Summary of criticism to be elicited if possible from the class:—

George has told us much of what he saw and did and has put his material into good order. But we feel that the words he uses are not those which came to him naturally. He has used grand words where simple ones would do better, so that he makes us think of his grand words rather than of the things he wishes to describe.]

2. Write a letter to thank a friend for a birthday present and to tell how you spent your birthday.

3. You have a whole day's holiday in which to do exactly as you please; how will you spend it? Write (1) as if you were writing to a schoolfellow, *or* (2) as if you were writing to your father.

4. Write a letter describing to your father, who is abroad, the work you are doing in your garden.

5. Write a letter to a railway company claiming compensation for damage done to your luggage (Haileybury).

6. You have asked a German friend, who knows English but who has never been in England, to join you in Edinburgh. He is to arrive in London at Victoria, and will have barely time to take a night express from Euston, in which he wishes to travel by sleeping-car. Write, giving him precise directions.

7. Write a letter as if from the secretary of a public man politely declining to be present at the distribution of prizes at a school (Haileybury).

8. A friend asks how you organized a debating society, [or natural history society, or cricket club], at your school, as he desires to organize a similar society. You reply, giving him the necessary information, and pointing out where, in your opinion, your own scheme might be bettered.

9. Give an account of a speech (1) in the form of a letter to your father, or (2) as if you were writing for a local newspaper. You are to describe the speaker and the audience, and to summarize the speech. [The exercise should deal, if possible, with a speech recently heard by the majority of the class.]

10. You receive the following note:—

DEAR A.,

It is a very long time since I have seen you. Can you spend the evening with me on Monday next; or, if that is not convenient, will you suggest another day during the next fortnight? We might go to a cricket match [*or* concert] together in the afternoon, and come back to dinner [*or* supper].

Sincerely yours,

J. H. BROWN.

J. H. Brown is a person of your own sex of whom (for good reasons which you are to give) you would prefer not to see more than you can help. He [*or* she] is not a person whom you positively dislike, but you are working hard, have only little time for your real friends, and you feel that J. H. B.'s tastes are so different from your own that it is waste of time for you to meet him [*or* her]. You are to refuse the invitation in such a way as to spare the feelings of your correspondent as much as possible, and yet without giving the false pretext that you are fully engaged. (Manchester Ruskin Hall).

11. Mme. de Genlis (the tutor of King Louis Philippe) declared that every one ought to have a motto, because a motto provides one to a certain degree with a rule for conduct; choose the motto you would prefer for yourself, and give the reasons for your choice.

12. The fulfilment of an ordinary duty may in certain cases be regarded as an act of heroism. Give an example of this.

13. 'Depend in life only on your own efforts.' Discuss the question as to (*a*) how far such a course is possible in a civilized country, and (*b*) how far it is good.

14. 'In order to be able to command you must learn to obey.' Explain this by means of an example.

15. A French (or German) boy asks why you are proud of being English? You reply in a letter.

16. Has a man the right to spend his own money as he pleases? Write a paper on this, as if for a school debating society.

You must illustrate your views by concrete examples of men in particular positions.

17. 'The desire to please.' How far is it good or bad?

18. Write a story for which the following would serve as a fit motto:—

A little neglect may breed mischief: for want of a nail the shoe was lost; for want of a shoe the horse was lost; and for want of a horse the rider was lost.

Benjamin Franklin.

19. Develop this idea—'Rich gifts wax poor when givers prove unkind.'—*Hamlet.*

20. Devise some form of 'fire-drill' for your school. Imagine that a fire breaks out in your dormitory, and state exactly how you and your comrades would act.

21. You are to suppose yourself the ward of a guardian in Australia who has placed you at school in England. You are on the point of completing your school education and have been asked by your guardian to give him your views with regard to your choice of a career. You are to write a letter to him explaining fully the reasons of your choice.

22. Describe a town with which you are familiar, after a heavy fall of snow, or at night time, or in the day time during fog.

23. Describe a performance at a circus, theatre, or concert, or a procession, which you have seen, as if you were writing to your elder brother or sister, who has been unable to go with you.

24. Describe the way from your home to your school, (1) with the object of enabling a person to find the way

from your description, (2) so that he may notice the chief points of interest as he goes.

25. Describe this scene: In the ingle-nook of a large farm-kitchen some children are listening to a tale told by their grandmother.

26. You have been over a cotton-mill, or a warehouse, or a factory, or into a coal-mine or salt-mine or cave; describe the experience in a letter written either (*a*) to your father, or (*b*) to a friend of your own age.

27. An architect about to rebuild your school asks you for a description of an ideal schoolroom, including its furniture and decoration. Reply, giving reasons for your choice of details.

28. Describe a fishing-rod to a boy who has never seen one.[1]

29. Bicycles came into common use between 1870 and 1875. You are required to describe a bicycle as if to an Englishman who has been in some uncivilised country for many years and who has never seen one.[1]

30. Describe a game of cricket [or football, hockey, lacrosse, golf, fives, or tennis, &c.] to a French boy who understands English, but who has never seen the game played.[1]

Try to make your description lively as well as accurate.

31. Describe the house that you would build for yourself, as if you were giving a first idea of it to an architect. [The description may be made more difficult by asking the pupil to select from the surrounding country the precise spot on which he would prefer to have the house built, giving reasons for his selection. In such a case the teacher should bear in mind the many questions involved, e. g. water-supply, drainage of soil, aspect with regard to the sun, artificial lighting (if near a town), ease of communications, &c. No hint of these questions should be given to the pupils before beginning.]

32. Describe Turner's picture of the 'Fighting Téméraire' so that a person who has not seen it would recognize it from your description.

33. Describe the happiest day of your holidays to a friend

[1] The writer must remember that, in this case, to use technical terms, without explaining them, will probably render his description valueless. He must use his own judgement as to how far such terms are indispensable.

whom you had hoped to have as a guest, but who has been kept at home through illness.

34. You have seen your friend *A* off by a liner to America. Write a description of the scene, either (i) for a newspaper, omitting personal details, or (ii) for a friend *B*, who is also a friend of *A*.

35. Two children, *A* and *B*, are given a piece of cake each. Each divides his cake with a younger brother, but the motives of the two children are different. *A* shares his cake from the pleasure he has in giving pleasure to others; *B* shares his from a sense of duty, but he is naturally greedy and dislikes giving. Analyse these two actions, and (i) say what conclusions can in your view be legitimately drawn from them with regard to the characters of the two boys, (ii) compare the 'merit' of the two actions.

36. In one of Æsop's fables, a miser has had his hoarded treasure stolen; an acquaintance says to him: 'put a stone in its place; that will be worth quite as much to you.' Discuss the truth of this.

37. A friend in Manchester tells you he has had trouble with regard to the repairing of a bicycle, that he has to write a letter to a solicitor, and does not know how to do it. He asks you to dictate a letter for him, as he is sure he will confuse the facts. In reply to a question from you as to the facts, he replies as follows:—'You see, I came back from Blackpool last Monday morning, and the cycle repairer to whom I had gone, Mr. Jones, brought the machine to the station with a bill for 25*s*. I found he had not had it properly lacquered and it cost me 7*s*. more to get that done. On the Tuesday before I got it damaged by running into a wall in order to avoid a boy, and the two cross tubes got buckled. I took it the same day to Jones, who said he could either cut and bush them for 15*s*., or replace them for 30*s*., and that they would be quite as good cut and bushed as if they were new; so I told him to have that done. Well, on Saturday morning I found he hadn't even started work, but he said it would be all right, though he had promised to let me have the machine by then. I went in on Saturday afternoon, and he told me he had spoilt the tubes trying to cut and bush them, but he would work late and finish the job properly. Well, you see the result. I refused to pay the 25*s*., and said I would pay 15*s*. as

I originally arranged. He could have done it all right if he hadn't been in a hurry and left it to the last, and now his solicitors have written saying he will take proceedings.'

In order to oblige your friend, you write a letter to the solicitors for him to sign, stating the facts of the case as clearly as you can and in such a way as to show that he is convinced that he is both morally and legally in the right. (Manchester Ruskin Hall.)

[The teacher must decide whether he should give his class the hint that the facts should be unravelled and related in the chronological order with precise dates.]

38. You are to suppose yourself at a large school of which the majority of the boys are going into the Army. Incendiary fires have broken out several times recently. You know the whole story, but are not in any way guilty. You have been questioned on the subject by the head master. You are to write a letter to your father, telling the whole history of the fires, and defending your reply to the head master.

39. You are interested in the career of a boy who is gifted but poor, and unable to go to a University [or Musical Academy, &c.], and write to a wealthy friend asking if he will pay for the boy's education, or lend him money for it on the undertaking that he will pay the whole or a portion back at a later stage. You are to say in what way, if any, you are yourself helping in the matter.

40. Analyse and discuss the meaning of the following passage by James Clerk Maxwell [1]:—

'He that would enjoy life and act with freedom must have the work of the day continually before his eyes. Not yesterday's work, lest he fall into despair, nor to-morrow's, lest he become a visionary,—not that which ends with the day, which is a worldly work, nor yet that only which remains to eternity, for by it he cannot shape his actions.

Happy is the man who can recognize in the work of To-day a connected portion of the work of life, and an embodiment of the work of Eternity. The foundations of

[1] See *Life of J. C. Maxwell*, by Lewis Campbell and William Garnett (Macmillan, 1882), p. 200. The passage is completed in the original by another paragraph which I have not quoted.

his confidence are unchangeable, for he has been made a partaker of Infinity. He strenuously works out his daily enterprises, because the present is given him for a possession.'

You are to write as if you were explaining the passage to your class.

VI. CRITICISM OF AN ESSAY ON THE GARIOCH DISTRICT

[The following school essay, written at Haileybury by Mr. H. Childers, who kindly allows me to print it here, was submitted to me for criticism. The criticism follows the essay. The capital letters in the margin are inserted for convenience of reference.]

(A) I have spent three summers in Aberdeenshire, and in that part of that county known as the Garioch District. This part is situated in the north of Aberdeenshire, and about twenty-five miles north-west of Aberdeen. The Don runs through the southern part of the Garioch but soon leaves it, running along the opposite side of the Bennachie Range to that on which the Garioch is situated. This range is the chief feature of the Garioch, but it is under it that the Garioch is situated. Bennachie has four points over 1,600 feet high, and its highest point, known as 'Oxen Craig', is over 1,700 feet high. Besides Bennachie there are many other hills around the Garioch, but these are all smaller than the Bennachie. One of these is Dunnideer, a small hill containing an old ruined castle on its summit; then there are the Foudland Hills, a range situated on the opposite side of the Garioch to Bennachie and containing three peaks. Both Bennachie and the Foudland Hills have large deer forests. The Don is the only big river in the Garioch, and after it there is only one other river, namely, the Ury, a small river running right through the Garioch and a very good river for trout fishing. There are a great many streams and burns, and of these the chief are the Shevock and Gady Burns, both of which run into the Ury, and the latter rises in Bennachie.

(B) Although being surrounded by hills, the Garioch District is one of the best cycling parts of Aberdeenshire, owing to its splendid roads, for through the Garioch runs

the old coach road from Aberdeen to Inverness which is still in the best of condition. There is also the old turnpike joining the coach road and running to Old Meldrum, and there is what is now the main road following the Great North of Scotland Railway to Inverness.

(C) The chief railway of the Garioch is the main line of the Great North of Scotland Railway running from Aberdeen to Inverness, and besides this there is only a branch line from Inveramsay to Macduff: these are the only railways

(D) in the Garioch. The Garioch contains no town; its principal village is Insch, which is rapidly growing, and where all the trains in the day, except the South Mail from Inverness, stop. Insch, like most of the newest villages, is almost wholly what might be called a 'granite village', as nearly all its shops and houses, churches, and most of the other buildings in it, are made of granite. It has very few shops, but does not possess such a thing as a barber's shop, but this is a trade which in the minds of the Scotch country people, is absolutely useless, as they cut one another's hair to their own pleasing. Besides Insch there is no other large village in the Garioch.

(E) The Garioch District contains a great number of woods both on the hills and on the low ground. The woods consist chiefly of firs, owing to their hardiness, and therefore their ability to endure the hard winter. The woods, especially those of firs, are extremely thick, and it is quite frequently the case that it is impossible to get through them. Besides firs, there are a great number of beech and lime trees, and avenues to private houses are generally lined on both sides with beeches or firs. Not many trees are able to sustain the frosts, snow, and bitter winds of the winter which prevail in the Garioch, and that is why the firs and beeches are the commonest. The oak and the elm cannot stand the hard winter. Now and then you occasionally see a 'Gean Tree'[1], a beautiful tree found more often in Scotland than in England.

Oats and barley are grown to a large extent in the Garioch, but oats are even more grown than barley.

[1] 'Tree for tree many persons would perhaps give the palm to the rich and changing reds of the wild cherry, or "gean", as it is called in the North.' (Taken from *The Times* [Literary Supplement], Sept. 19, 1902.)

Farming is the great industry in the Garioch, the soil being good. Besides oats and barley, turnips, chiefly known in the North as 'nips', are grown to a large extent. There is very little pasture-land, and cattle are kept to a larger extent than sheep. Potatoes are also largely grown, but there is less hay than in England. The winters are extremely hard, snow generally beginning to fall at the beginning of November, and sometimes lasting till well into April, but from May to October the weather is generally mild and warm.

The soil is very good and rather sandy.

Several granite quarries are found in the Garioch, chiefly on the side of Bennachie, but except on that mountain they are not yet very extensively worked.

It is an interesting fact which I have been told, that all the sheep which graze in the Royal Parks, as Green, Hyde, and Regent's Parks, are sent down by two firms in Aberdeenshire, at the beginning of March, and are all sold off by the autumn to London butchers, and also that the shepherds who take care of them are Aberdeenshire lads, from round the Garioch.

(F) The three old castles of the Garioch, Leslie, Lickleyhead, and Harthill, were in the early times built to protect the district from raids of the hill men.

The only one of these castles which is still inhabited is Lickleyhead, the other two, Leslie and Harthill, are in ruins. All these three castles are built after the same manner, with a number of little turrets, and loop-holed very much.

They were held by the Leslies and Leiths, who owned most of the Garioch.

(G) During the holidays I have bicycled a great deal, and therefore by this time know the roads about here exceedingly well. The roads are most excellent for bicycling on, as the granite from the hills is excellent for mending them, and after rain they very soon dry. The old coach from Aberdeen to Inverness runs right through the Garioch, and I don't think that there are many roads to rival it as a bicycling road.

The old road by which the Duke of Cumberland advanced to Culloden from Aberdeen is now a mere track running under Bennachie.

(H) In conclusion, I would like to mention about the sport of the Garioch. Grouse and roe deer are found on Bennachie, and to a small extent on the Foudland Hills, and the low ground is very good for partridges, of which the district contains a great number. There are also hares, brown and blue, rabbits, golden and green plover, snipe, pheasants, and pigeons.

The corn being still uncut, the partridge shooting this year is very late, and we therefore have not been able to get many partridges or hares, but the plover give great sport, owing to the great difficulty of being able to get within shot of them.

H. C.

PS.—The word Garioch should be pronounced as if spelt Gerry. [The G is hard. Murray's Handbook for Scotland gives 'Gherry'.]

Criticism of the foregoing Essay

Introductory. The general impression left after reading this composition is that the writer has taken a great deal of trouble, that he has powers both of observation and expression worth cultivating, but that he has not learnt how 'to write'.

In order to illustrate the methods I should use in dealing with a composition of this kind, I have put my criticisms in the form of a lesson. It is obvious, however, that although the criticism is still far from being exhaustive, it would be impossible in a single lesson to discuss so many points with advantage; and in actual teaching it would be the object of the teacher not to state his own view, but to elicit, if possible, criticisms from the writer, and the class, in the first instance, reserving to himself their re-statement in a final form.

Criticism of the composition as a whole. You give no title to your paper, so that the reader is left in doubt as to its object. Even after reading it through I am not quite certain what you set out to do.

The first sentence suggests that you intend to describe your holiday in the Garioch District, with your own doings

as the most important feature of your composition, and the Garioch as a background. But in what follows you refer but little to what you have yourself done and seen. You mention that you have bicycled; you show incidentally that you have been at Insch; you say that you have been told a certain fact about the Garioch sheep, and that you have had some shooting; but out of your nine pages of MS. there is barely a page altogether devoted to your personal experiences. Hence one may fairly conclude that what you really wish to give is an impersonal description of the district. Now such a description might be intended either

(1) for persons who have never heard of the Garioch, and whom you wish to interest in the district, or

(2) for persons already more or less interested and inclined to visit it—a guidebook description.

In the former case you would wish to attract and hold your reader's attention by giving him a vivid picture of the country.[1] If you look through your composition you will see that it can hardly be called vivid. You have not attempted to describe either the form or colour of the landscape (the only adjectives of colour you give are quoted from *The Times*), and there is only a trace of an attempt to describe the character of the people.

I conclude that it is the guidebook that, intentionally or unintentionally, you have chosen as a model. You are quite right in that case not to overload your description with picturesque detail. You are writing for a reader who will be bored if you tell him too much about what he will see for himself before long. What he needs is a *clear* and *systematic* description of the main features of the country—and of the means of reaching it. Let us then analyse your composition as a whole and see if you have fulfilled the fundamental requirement of a good guidebook description: if you have formed your composition on a clear and systematic plan which you had in your mind, or on paper, before you began your fair copy.

I have inserted letters A, B, C., &c., in the margin of the composition to mark off its various sections, and I have

[1] See, for instance, R. L. Stevenson's descriptions of Highland scenery in *Kidnapped*, or those of William Black in *White Wings*, and other novels.

marked off the sections of the analysis given below to correspond:

A. The Garioch District; situated in the north of Aberdeenshire.
   Its geographical features:
   1. The Don.
   2. The Bennachie Range; the Foudland Hills; smaller hills.
   3. The Don and other rivers.
B. The roads, good for bicycling. Coach road, Aberdeen to Inverness. (Compare G.)
C. Railways of the district.
D. Absence of towns. Insch, the only village; buildings of granite. No barber's shop.
E. Woods: chiefly firs, also beeches and limes. Crops: oats, barley, and turnips. Pasture. Potatoes. Climate. Soil. Granite quarries. Sheep, taken to London Parks.
F. Castles; territorial families.
G. The roads, good for bicycling. Coach road, Aberdeen to Inverness. (Compare B.)
H. Sport. Wild animals. Grouse, roedeer, partridges, hares, rabbits, plover, snipe, pheasants, and pigeons.

Is such a plan satisfactory?

Is it right to sandwich in the descriptions of the roads, railways, and towns (B, C, and D) between the sections dealing with the natural features, the hills and the rivers on the one hand, and the woods and climate on the other (E); to go back to artificial features again—the castles, and the roads (sections F and C); and to conclude with wild animals (section H)?

Look in detail at section A: you will see that the Don appears twice without any apparent necessity. Look at section E: you will see that 'pasture' comes between turnips and potatoes, and that after the potatoes you return to your sheep. I think you will agree that your plan is not good, but, unsatisfactory as it is, it shows that you have an idea that a plan is necessary; you only need to take more trouble in mapping it out.

The plan must in all cases be determined by two things, the precise object you have in view, and the material you have to dispose of.

I suggest the following as a possible plan for the material which you either give or obviously have at your disposal.

1. The Garioch District; general situation and boundaries. [You should mention at the outset the pronunciation of 'Garioch', which you give in a postscript.]
2. The railroad, by which it is traversed, and the chief stations on the lines [put in this important place because it is important for the reader of a guidebook to know how he is to reach his destination].
3. The general aspect and formation of the district, the ranges of mountains and hills, their geological formation, heights, and directions; isolated hills; the watersheds and rivers. Climate. Woods. Wild animals. Sport. Agriculture.
4. The villages; the castles; historic families.
5. The roads; cycling from one village to another.

This is of course only one of out many possible plans.

Realize that the plan is the *basis* of your composition. Even without the personal touches of detail which help so largely to make a composition attractive, we can often win the interest of the reader if we take pains to master our material thoroughly, and to place it before him in the best way we can. He then feels himself guided, and in the presence of a *will*, whereas the indecision of a slipshod arrangement leaves him uncomfortable.

Criticism of paragraphs. I now come to questions of detail.

When you are writing on a plan, your paragraphs will be shaped roughly so as to take their place in that plan, but they also have an internal structure which has to be dealt with in just the same way as we dealt with the structure of the composition as a whole.

Take the *third* sentence of the essay (line 4). You begin by mentioning the Don, and introduce the Bennachie range incidentally. You then go on: 'This range is the chief feature of the Garioch'. But if it is the chief feature, why not begin with it and leave the Don until later?

I have not seen your map and cannot quite make out the directions from your descriptions, but I suggest, tentatively, the following as an opening:—

'The centre of the Garioch District, where I spent my

summer holidays,[1] lies in the northern part of Aberdeenshire about twenty-five miles north-west from Aberdeen.'

You should next define the boundaries of the district. You mention incidentally in line 25 that it is 'surrounded by hills', but give no further particulars. You might then continue:—

'The district is dominated by the Bennachie range, which runs across it from east to west. Bennachie has one peak, Oxen Craig, over 1,700 feet in height, and three others of 1,600 feet. . . .'

With the rivers you begin better (line 18).

'The Don is the only big river in the Garioch.' But one wants something more in the way of physical description. The river courses are necessarily related to the directions of the mountain or hill ranges, and you must make that relationship evident. You mention that the Gady Burn rises in Bennachie, but that is all.

It is a symptom of your want of construction that you use so many co-ordinate sentences joined together by *and*, each sentence following its predecessor as an afterthought. 'The Don is the only big river in the Garioch, and after it there is only one other river, namely, the Ury, a small river running right through the Garioch and a very good river for trout fishing.' You don't give enough material for one to rewrite the sentences well.

This might do:—

'Two rivers run through the Garioch district: the Don, a big river, and its tributary, the Ury, small, but famous for its trout fishing. The Don and Ury are fed by many burns[2] flowing from the hillsides. Of these the largest are the Gady Burn, which rises in the Bennachie range, and the Shevock Burn. Both fall into the Ury.'

Take again the section on the woods. You mention that they consist chiefly of 'firs owing to their hardiness,' &c., and repeat exactly the same thing a few lines below.

I have condensed what you say, using as far as possible your own phrases, and adding nothing. Read over your original paragraph aloud first and then the following, so

[1] Since, as we agreed, the district is the important thing, begin with that; the holiday is of minor importance, and you may therefore introduce it parenthetically.

[2] Not 'streams and burns'; 'burn' is Scotch for 'stream'.

as to judge whether in your own opinion the paragraph has gained by the condensation. (Omit the notes on first reading.)

'Both on the hills and on the low ground of the Garioch District, there are many woods.[1] But the trees are limited in kind, for few can resist[2] the frosts, the snow, and bitter winds of a Garioch winter. The firs are the commonest of all, and often grow so close that it is impossible to push through[3] them. Next come the beeches and the limes; and we occasionally see the 'rich and changing reds'[4] of the gean, or wild cherry, a beautiful tree, less rare in Scotland than in England.

'The approaches to private houses are generally formed by avenues of beeches or firs. The oak and the elm cannot live in so hard a climate.'

Minor points of style. 1. You use the same word over and over again until the ear gets tired of it. Read aloud your first few pages and note the reiteration of the words 'Garioch' and 'Bennachie'. With a little ingenuity you could easily avoid this.

2. In lines 13–14 you say a 'small hill *containing* an old ruined castle'.

The object of the verb 'contain' must be something inside its subject. A man does not contain his hat. You may perhaps say that a mountain range 'contains' three peaks; but a hill does not usually contain a castle.

I suggest: 'Dunnideer, a small hill with (or "distinguished by") an old ruined castle on its summit.'

3. Line 25. 'Although *being* surrounded by hills.' This suggests that the hills are closing in on the Garioch like an invading army. Omit 'being'.

4. Line 51. 'The woods consist chiefly of firs owing to [their hardiness, and therefore] their ability to endure the hard winter.'

By omitting the words which I have enclosed in brackets you take nothing from the sense. Why not omit them?

5. Line 58. 'Not many trees are able to *sustain* the frosts,

[1] Or, as an alternative, 'woods abound'.

[2] See below.

[3] A purist might prefer 'between', but 'through' is quite justifiable, and, I think, better here.

[4] Take care to use quotation marks when you are quoting.

snow, and bitter winds of the winter'. This raises an interesting and delicate question. By 'sustain' you here mean 'resist'.

I feel that it is quite right to say 'sustain the frost'.
„ „ wrong to say 'sustain the snow'.
„ possibly right to say 'sustain the bitter wind'.

Let us try to see why.

First let us think of different phrases illustrating some of the uses of the word 'sustain':

To sustain a heavy weight.	To sustain pressure.
To sustain a person, an army.	To sustain a blow, an attack.
„ life.	„ a loss, damage
„ courage.	(resulting from an attack).

(Speaking to pupils on the 'classical side' one would obviously examine how far the different senses were already developed in Latin.)

The original meaning of the word in Latin is 'to uphold', 'to support from below, as a prop, without yielding'.

Now you may direct your attention to two different features of this action:

either (1) to the fact that the prop saves the body sustained from falling;
or (2) to the fact that the prop resists the downward pressure of the body sustained, without yielding.

The figurative senses in the left-hand column above have been developed either in Latin or in English from the consideration of feature (1) and imply the idea 'to save from falling', 'to support'.

The figurative senses in the right-hand column have been developed from the consideration of feature (2) and imply the idea 'to resist pressure continuously without yielding'.

If, now, the object of the verb 'to sustain' is a substantive denoting a thing or person or persons, you immediately think of the idea 'to support' as in 'to sustain an army'.

If the object of the verb 'to sustain' is a substantive expressing or suggesting 'action against something', it is the idea of unyielding resistance that comes into your mind, as in 'to sustain an attack, a shock'.

Now apply this to your own case. You wish to use

'sustain' with the sense of 'to resist'. Does *frost* suggest the idea of 'action against something' sufficiently to call up the idea of resistance? I think so. Does *snow*? I should say no, unless you refer to the actual weight of the snow and use the word 'sustain' here in its literal sense. It would be a bad trick to employ the word with two meanings, one applying to snow and the other to frost and wind. With regard to 'bitter winds', I am doubtful. Perhaps by linking up 'bitter winds' directly to 'frosts' you may help yourself out of the difficulty. I should agree, though doubtfully, to the phrase

'to sustain the frosts and bitter winds of a Garioch winter',

But if you want to bring in the snow as well there are only two ways out of your difficulty.

You may (1) use the word 'resist' instead of 'sustain' as I have done in the revised version on p. 154 above. But you undoubtedly lose something by the change; the word 'sustain' conveys to my mind a sense somewhat more personal and less abstract or purely mechanical than the word 'resist'; it suggests continued and intentional resistance, and I prefer it as applied to a living organism which may be capable of modification to suit its environment.

You may (2) keep the word 'sustain' and impose the right sense on it by introducing some such abstract word as 'action', and say,

'Not many trees can sustain the action of the frosts, snow, and bitter winds of a Garioch winter'.

But here again you lose something else. An abstract word nearly always makes a description less vivid; you begin to reflect, instead of seeing. 'Attack' or 'violence' would perhaps replace 'action' to advantage.

On the whole, I prefer to use the word 'resist'.

6. Notice the condensation of the phrase 'the frosts ... of the winter, which prevail in the Garioch' to 'the frosts ... of a Garioch winter'. Ask yourself which version you prefer and why.

VII. CRITICISM OF A PASSAGE FROM KINGLAKE'S HISTORY OF THE CRIMEAN WAR

The following passage describes the assault of the 'Great Redoubt' by the British, in the Battle of the Alma, fought on Sept. 20, 1854, by the British and French allies against the Russians. It is taken from Kinglake's *Invasion of the Crimea* (1st edit., 1863, vol. ii, pp. 331–3).[1]

A brigade under General Codrington (son of the victor of Navarino), together with one additional regiment, the 95th, had crossed the river Alma in some confusion, and was advancing up the slope beyond to the attack of the 'Great Redoubt' in the face of a storm of fire from the artillery and muskets of the defenders.

The assailants were nearing the breastwork, when, after a lull of a few moments, its ordnance all thundered at once, or, at least, so nearly at the same moment, that the pathway of their blast was a broad one; and there were many who fell; but the onset of our soldiery was becoming a rush. Codrington, riding in front of the men, gaily cheered them on; and all who were not struck down by shot pressed on towards the long bank of smoke which lay dimly enfolding the redoubt.

But already—though none of the soldiery engaged then knew who wrought the spell—a hard stress had been put upon the enemy. For a while indeed the white bank of smoke, lit through here and there with the slender flashes of musketry, stood fast in the front of the parapet, and still all but shrouded the helmets and the glittering bayonets within; but it grew more thin: it began to rise; and, rising, it disclosed a grave change in the counsels of the Russian Generals. Some Englishman—or many perhaps at the same moment—looking keen through the smoke, saw teams of artillery horses moving, and there was a sound of ordnance wheels. Our panting soldiery broke from their silence. 'By all that is holy! he is limbering up!' 'He is carrying off his guns!' 'Stole away!' 'Stole away!' 'Stole away!' The glacis of the Great Redoubt had come to sound more joyous than the covert's side in England.

The embrasures were empty, and in rear of the work, long artillery teams—eight-horse and ten-horse teams—were rapidly dragging off the guns.

Then a small childlike youth ran forward before the throng, carrying a colour. This was young Anstruther. He carried the Queen's colour of the 'Royal Welsh'. Fresh from the games of English school life, he ran fast; for, heading all who strove to keep up with him, he gained the redoubt, and dug the butt end of

[1] Kinglake altered several details of this passage later (see the sixth edition, published in 1875, vol. iii, p. 122). The discussion of his alterations would form the subject for an interesting lesson.

the flagstaff into the parapet, and there for a moment he stood, holding it tight and taking breath. Then he was shot dead; but his small hands, still clasping the flagstaff, drew it down along with him, and the crimson silk lay covering the boy with its folds; but only for a moment, because William Evans, a swift-footed soldier, ran forward, gathered up the flag, and raising it proudly made claim to the Great Redoubt on behalf of the 'Royal Welsh'. The colours floating high in the air, and seen by our people far and near, kindled in them a raging love for the ground where it stood. Breathless men found speech. Codrington, still in the front, uncovered his head, waved his cap, for a sign to his people, and then, riding straight at one of the embrasures, leapt his grey Arab into the breastwork. There were some eager and swift-footed soldiers who sprang the parapet nearly at the same moment; more followed. At the same instant Norcott's riflemen came running in from the east, and the swiftest of them bounded into the work at its right flank. The enemy's still lingering skirmishers began to fall back, and descended—some of them slowly—into the dip where their battalions were massed. Our soldiery were up; and in a minute they flooded in over the parapet, hurrahing, jumping over, hurrahing, a joyful English crowd.

If we analyse the piece we find the following to be the main 'facts' which Kinglake wishes to describe:—

(1) The troops under Codrington were advancing against the 'Great Redoubt' half hidden in smoke. (Lines 1 to 14.)

(2) The smoke began to lift and showed the British that the Russians were withdrawing their guns, for a reason unknown to them. The British shouted for joy; the smoke cleared away, and the earthwork was seen to be empty of its guns. (Lines 14 to 25.)

(3) A youth called Anstruther ran forward and planted the colour of the Royal Welsh in the parapet of the Redoubt, but was killed at once. The colour fell to the ground and was promptly lifted again by William Evans, a private of the same regiment. (Lines 26 to 37.)

(4) The English, seeing the flag in the Redoubt, were seized with the desire to come up to it. Codrington rode up to the embrasure and leapt into the breastwork, and a few of the swiftest of his infantry jumped in almost at the same moment. Norcott's riflemen ran in to the work on its east flank. The enemy's skirmishers fell back on to the main body; and the English troops swarmed over the parapet, hurrahing. (Lines 37 to 51.)

Now such a narration of the facts is dull; it misses half the aim of a story, for it leaves little impression on the mind

of the reader, who would pass on and forget. Kinglake keeps the main facts in their order, but, never for a moment losing grip of that order, gives just the details which make the reader feel as if he were present at the scene. He appeals to our senses of sight and hearing in almost every line.

The orderly marshalling of the facts is less evident to the careless reader than the vivid details. But those details by their very vividness would, unless subordinated to the general plan, merely leave an impression on him of confused brilliancy. He would carry away less with him than from the dull plan. The dull plan is more useful than showy confused details.

It is the power of marshalling details so as to leave a truthful and a definite impression on the mind of the reader that makes a great writer of descriptive history.

Now let us take this piece paragraph by paragraph.

The first section describes the 'advance of the soldiers under heavy fire'.

The passage awakes in one's mind the idea of 'splendid heroism'. But Kinglake uses neither the word 'splendid' nor the word 'heroism'. He knows that any abstract conclusion that you can force your reader to discover for himself makes a far deeper impression on him than what you say. He marshals his facts so as to produce the impression. He keeps himself almost unseen. The average writer could not, in describing so stirring an incident, have resisted the temptation to use adjectives and adverbs such as 'beautiful', 'grand', 'splendidly', 'magnificently', which at once bring the narrator and his own personal feelings on the scene, and distract the reader's attention from the action. In the whole of this paragraph, in which the total number of adjectives and adverbs is small, there is only one single adverb that suggests the author—'Codrington, riding in front of the men, *gaily* cheered them on'—and it is open to question whether the piece would not gain by the omission of that one adverb:

'Codrington, riding in front of the men, cheered them on'.

Look at the other adjectives: they are descriptive, and merely add details of fact, undoubted and independent of any personal impression.

There are only four adjectives, all necessary—'a *few* moments', 'at the *same* moment', 'the pathway of their

blast was a *broad* one', 'the *long* bank of smoke'. The adverbs are 'at once', 'nearly', 'dimly'.

Possibly objection might be taken to the use of 'so nearly at the same moment' closely following on 'after a lull of a few moments'. It is, as a rule, not good to use the same expression twice over within a line or two. But the phrase 'its ordnance all thundered at once' obliterates to the ear of the present writer the unemphatic 'after a few moments' and obviates the objection that might otherwise be a real one.

In the second section (lines 14–25), Kinglake might well have explained the reason for the retreat of the Russians; as a historian he knows it; but he prefers to keep his reader in suspense, and not to interfere with his description of the action by giving its explanation.

Try the effect of turning the exclamations of the soldiery into 'indirect narration': 'The soldiers shouted that the enemy were limbering up, that they were carrying off their guns and were stealing away'. The effect is, of course, supremely ridiculous. It is part of the writer's business to know when he may make his characters speak instead of relating their words in the third person.

In the third section (lines 26–37), try, if you like, to improve the mode of narration. You will not find it easy. Kinglake gives you first the picture of the 'small child-like youth running forward with the colour', and then answers your instinctive question before it is put, 'This was young Anstruther.'

'Then he was shot dead.' Just the fact—no heroics, only the physical description of his falling, covered by the flag. Evans, 'a swift-footed soldier', ran forward and raised the flag again. You see the race for the Redoubt before you, and with hardly a word said.

The fourth section is quite straightforward and scarcely needs comment. The last two lines may be noted as extraordinarily vivid, with an appeal even stronger to the ear than the eye—'hurrahing, jumping over, hurrahing'.

Let us now read the whole through again. Our analysis has not, I think, taken the life out of the piece. After looking at the details we feel once more that Kinglake has not merely put together a patchwork of sentences; he has made us both see with his eyes, and share his impression of the scene he describes.

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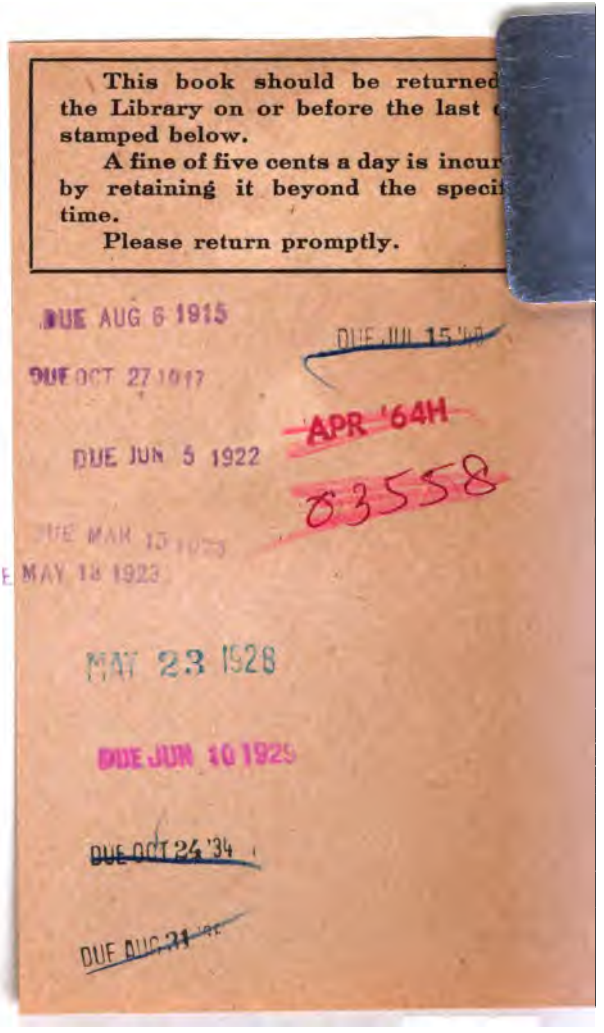
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